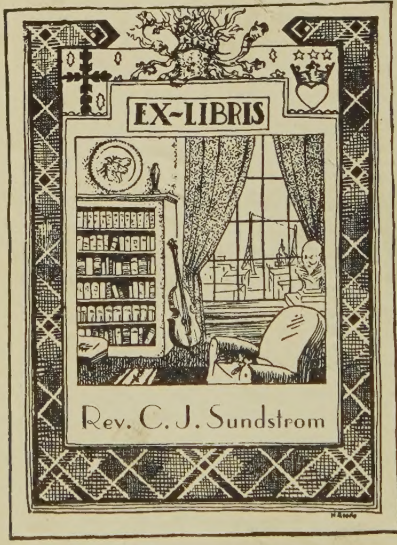
BETHEL SEMINARY LIBRARY
REG 236.24 W563
Wheeler, Mar As it is in heaven,
3 0513 0001 2774 2

AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

BY ONE OF THE REDEEMED


EX-LIBRIS
Rev. C. J. Sundstrom

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/asitisinheaven0000mary

To
Mrs. Jas. Potter -
from Your Friend
Ella S. Hulse.
Jan 1st 1908.

MY FIRST VIEW OF THE HEAVENLY LANDSCAPE.

AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

BY ONE OF THE REDEEMED

(MARY SPARKES WHEELER)

P. W. ZIEGLER CO.
PHILADELPHIA

11-535

Copyright 1906
by
C. E. Miller

S38738

The Library
BETHEL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
ST. PAUL MINNESOTA

236.24
W 563

TO

THE VAST NUMBER OF THOSE WHOSE DEPARTED
FRIENDS CLOSED THEIR EYES IN DEATH, TO
AWAKEN IN THE BEAUTIFUL MORNING.

Thy will be done on earth

AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE.

THE AWAKENING 15

CHAPTER II.

THE MEETING 35

CHAPTER III.

HEAVEN A PLACE 53

CHAPTER IV.

ON SPIRIT WINGS 73

CHAPTER V.

DUST TO DUST 89

CHAPTER VI.

IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE 103

CHAPTER VII.

ANGELIC COMPANIONSHIP 123

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SHINING CITY 147

CHAPTER IX.

SEEING ELSIE 163

CONTENTS.

PAGE

CHAPTER X.

Christ 179

CHAPTER XI.

No Age in Heaven 195

CHAPTER XII.

Whiter Than Snow 221

CHAPTER XIII.

Buds of Paradise 239

CHAPTER XIV.

Infant Choirs 251

CHAPTER XV.

The Father's Tribute 273

CHAPTER XVI.

The Everlasting Arms 295

CHAPTER XVII.

Light in Darkness 317

CHAPTER XVIII.

Heavenly Activities 335

CHAPTER XIX.

Superior Joys 351

CHAPTER XX.

There Is No Death 367

CHAPTER XXI.

The Reunion 397

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

PAGE.

My First View of the Heavenly Landscape . . . . . Frontispiece

"Welcome Home, My Darling One! Good Morning!" 45

"I Saw Myself Lying There Amid the Flowers." 97

"Do I Look as You Expected?" 175

"When Jesus Stood by the Grave." 207

"Every Verse I Read Seemed to Increase Auntie's Faith." 233

"Just Then There Came Before Us Three Persons." 267

"Oh, Baby, Baby, My Old Heart Throbs and Breaks!" 281

"In the Arms of Jesus." 291

"Like a Flash the Mother Eagle Shot Under Him." 312

"Oh, Will! I Didn't Know You Had Come." . 381

"There, White Robed and Garlanded, Stood My Little Edith." 406

JESUS SAID —

"Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven."

"Many shall come from the East and West and shall sit down in the kingdom of heaven."

"It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven."

"Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

"For I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my father which is in heaven."

"Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

"For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven."

"Neither can they die any more, for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God."

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you, I go to prepare a place for you."

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment."

"The name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem."

PAUL SAID —

"But the gift of God is eternal life."

"For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality."

"We have a building of God, an house not made with hands eternal in the heavens."

"Who maketh his angels spirits and his ministers a flame of fire."

"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation."

"A city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

"But now they desire a better country, that is an heavenly :: :: :: for He hath prepared for them a city."

"For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."

JOHN SAID —

"We shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as he is."

"And they sung a new song."

"And lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds, and people and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes."

"They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat."

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

"These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white."

"And I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps."

"And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain."

"And the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass."

"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

"There shall be no night there."

CHAPTER I.

THE AWAKENING.

The first view of the heavenly landscape with its serene and stormless atmosphere, its etherial beauties and its mysterious and transporting music. The soul's first wonder and delight, with the dawning memory of the final earthly illness.

I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness. (PSA. 17 : 15.)

IN THE BEAUTIFUL MORNING.

The storm and the darkness—the desolate night.
But the ship saileth sure, and the harbor's in sight;
And a melody swells
From the chime o' the bells;
"Home in the beautiful morning."

O, long was the seaway, with billows to breast;
But we dreamed on those billows of havens of rest;
O'er the ocean's sad knells
Still the chime o' the bells—
"Home in the beautiful morning."

'Mid the wrecks that were tossed of the storm and the strife
We had drifted so far from the love that is life.
But the bells o'er the foam,
Ever singing of home—
"Home in the beautiful morning."

O, storm, and black billows—not hopeless we roam,
For love guides the ship to the white shores of home.
And the melody swells
From the jubilant bells—
"Home in the beautiful morning."

—*Frank L. Stanton.*

THE AWAKENING.

It was a beautiful morning when I awakened from slumber. I had not been sleeping long. It seemed as if I had but closed my eyes and opened them again; but the sleep was most satisfactory and refreshing.

My attention was attracted by the wonderful change in the atmosphere. The air was so balmy and invigorating that every respiration seemed to set new life currents flowing through my entire being.

Could it be possible that yesterday I had been an invalid, with failing health, and struggling with reverses that had come into my life? Had I ever been disheartened? Had I ever suffered pain or disappointment in any form? Impossible. For now my spirits were so buoy-

ant, and my heart so full of joy, as to cause me to be incapable of either weariness or woe. I saw, too, that I wore white flowing garments of shining texture which puzzled and delighted me.

I seemed to have been awakened by the most enchanting music; which floated in upon my ear like the sound of an innumerable throng singing in the distance in the sweetest, softest notes, then coming nearer, bursting forth into rapturous and soul ravishing song.

"Where am I?" I questioned. "Who are those unseen musicians, and singers? How came I with these garments? Surely I am dreaming. No, it is not a dream. I had no dream that I can recall; not even an intimation of one during my slumber, and I know, that I am more awake at this moment than I ever have been before. My intellect is more keen, my vision is clearer. This is *reality;* but where am I?"

Never before had I gazed upon a scene so indescribably beautiful. Never has language seemed so inadequate as now when I attempt to describe the wonderful landscape spreading before me in every direction. The green sward rivaled in beauty the softest and rarest velvet. The flowing river, with its broad expanse, clear as crystal, with myriads of purest lilies floating on its surface, filling the air with perfume, gave a charm to the place, and a joy to the heart, that words cannot represent.

There were multitudes of other wondrous exotic flowers, nameless to me, as I had never seen them before, but whose loveliness and fragrance exceeded the lilies; and majestic trees, towering upward with their ever-varying and magnificent foliage, reflected in the clear water beneath them; beautiful birds, of marvelous song, and brilliant plumage, all combined to fill me with astonishment and

rapture. I had never seen anything like it. I had never heard or read of anything like this in any land beneath the skies.

"What can be the name of this place?" I asked myself. I tried to recall the immediate past, but it eluded me, and I fell into day dreaming which carried my memory back to early years.

In the bloom and vigor of my youthful days, I had been blessed with the friendship of one whom I conceived to be among the purest and most noble of God's creation. I met him at the home of his parents, on a holiday visit from college. I noticed his ardent love for them, and tender, thoughtful devotion; and saw that his presence always gave them joy and pride. He was prepossessing in appearance, with broad, intellectual brow, and dark expressive eyes that beamed with joy, and sometimes seemed to dance with gladness.

But the beauty of his soul far exceeded that of his outward appearance. At his approach darkness and discontent gave place to light and peace. Purity and love were enthroned within his heart, and he did not live for himself, but found his highest joy in ministering to others.

Our interest in each other seemed to be mutual. True love does not depend for its existence upon beauty, wealth or social position. It cannot long remain concealed, but, often, unconsciously to its possessor, reveals itself to the object of its desire.

When he told me of his love, and we plighted our faith either to other, and fully realized that we were to be united in heart and life, our joy knew no measure. The loving trust I reposed in his strong, brave, faithful heart, seemed to make *me* strong. Life was full of new interpretations, and invested with a po-

tency for good that I had never before known.

We were married. O, the bliss of the few short years that followed! The angel of love was enthroned in our hearts and home, and love illumines everything it touches.

The sun, if it shines upon the dark storm-cloud, makes the glorious rainbow of hope, and promise. It transforms the dew drops into diamonds, the snow and ice into silver and gold, and while it gilds the highest peak of the snow-capped mountains with radiance, it stoops to kiss the lily of the valley, and to paint the little violet's lovely hues. If it shines upon the most rugged pathway of life, it lights it with beauty and glory. Thus *our* pathway was illumined, and Faith, Hope and Love were our abiding guests.

I had read noted writers' glowing pictures of wedded love, the poets' exquisite

idyls of its bliss. Shakespeare's Desdemona, his Portia—Miranda and Imogen, and many more of his sweet heroines had often thrilled me. I had read Milton's description as Adam led his bride to the nuptial bower of Eden:—

"Joyous the birds; fresh gales and gentle airs
Whispered it to the woods, and from their wings
Flung rose, flung odors from the spicy shrub."
Here Love his golden shafts employ; here lights
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wing."

But all written descriptions seemed tame, and unsatisfactory—so far beneath the reality of the experience into which we had entered. We felt in our heart of hearts that even Shakespeare himself had failed in his delineations of real love. Language can not portray it. The heart must feel its warmth to fully understand its wonderful power.

Two years passed rapidly away. Then a daughter was born to us. Our cup of happiness was full; and with heartfelt

gratitude my dear husband and I thanked the gracious Giver for the precious gift. We consecrated her budding life to her Father in Heaven, and promised to train her for the skies.

Day after day our darling increased in loveliness. She was the joy of our household, the pride of her parents, and the admiration of all who knew her. Her father imprinted a kiss upon her cheek each morning as he left home for his place of business; and the first question asked on his return was:

"Where is my little Edith?"

One evening he came in a heavy storm of rain. His clothing was wet. He complained of chilliness, but thought a rest and a cup of hot coffee would set him "all right again." He retired early without complaint, but in the night he grew feverish, and before the morning dawned he was very ill.

Our physician was called. Despite all

efforts to relieve him, he continued to grow worse until the doctor said: "It is as I feared. Pneumonia has developed, but we will apply the remedies and hope that he will soon be better."

Alas! In a few days, the disease had progressed so rapidly that all hope of the recovery of my precious one, was abandoned. I tried to conceal my sorrow for his sake, and smiled upon him as best I could; but the tears would start unbidden and true to his nature, forgetting his own pain, he tried to comfort me.

"It is all right, my darling," he said. "We have spent five beautiful years together, and we shall not long be separated."

"Do not speak of leaving me," I sobbed. "How can I live without you?"

"God will strengthen you, and give you peace: and our precious child will still be left to comfort you. Tell her, her father is gone to dwell with Jesus, and will look

for her mother and for her to come to him.

"Dear one," he continued, "I am only going a little before you. This is not our home. Please read to me the passage from Prentice, that I have loved so long."

I took down the book from the library shelf, and turning my face to hide the tears that were coursing down my cheeks, I read in as steady a voice as I could command:

"I cannot believe that earth is man's abiding place. It cannot be that our life is cast up by the ocean of eternity to float a moment upon its waves, and then sink into nothingness, else why is it that the glorious aspirations which leap like angels from the temple of our hearts are forever wandering about unsatisfied?

"Why is it, that the rainbow and clouds come over us with a beauty that is not of earth, and pass off and leave us

to muse upon their favored loveliness?

"Why is it, that the stars who hold their festival around the midnight throne, are set above the grasp of our limited faculties, forever mocking us with their unapproachable glory? and finally, why is it that bright forms of human beauty are presented to our view, and then taken from us, leaving the thousand streams of affection to flow back in Alpine torrents upon our hearts?

"We are born for a higher destiny than that of earth. There is a realm where the rainbow never fades, where the stars will be spread before us like islands that slumber on the ocean; and where the beings that pass before us like shadows shall stay in our presence forever."

He made an effort to suppress the cough until I had finished, when he struggled for breath. Remaining quiet for a few moments until he had gained sufficient strength he whispered:

"That was beautiful, but please read to me now something that is much *more* precious. Read the first three verses of the fourteenth of John."

I took the Bible and read:

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also."

"Blessed Jesus, these are Thy words," he whispered. "*Come and—receive—me—unto—thyself.*"

He closed his eyes and sank into a gentle slumber, and I soon realized that it was the beginning of the sleep of death. In a few moments he ceased to breathe; my beloved was not, for God had taken him.

Then the sun of my life went down. All

was darkness save the halo of light that encircled the life of my precious daughter.

Life now was in eclipse. My brightest joys had faded. The dearest object of my undying love had departed from the earth forever. How could I help suffering? If love could have saved him he would not have left me. If love for him could have died out of my heart and have been buried in the grave with him, my sufferings would have been at an end. But love for our dear departed ones we tenderly cherish, and their loss creates a sorrow which we wish to retain.

As years went by, and my darling child grew in beauty and intelligence, the halo grew larger, until it seemed to shed something of its brightness over all the world about me. Hope blossomed anew in my heart. She constantly reminded me of her father, she was so like him in many ways, and her heart was so full of love

for me that when she threw her little white arms around my neck caressingly —kissed me over and over again—called me her "dearest mamma," I felt strong enough to face an assembled world, for her advancement or defense.

Yes! it was sweet to live for her, to hope for her, to anticipate the bright future that awaited us, when she had reached maturity, and had attained the heights that I was sure lay before her.

But in spite of my pleasure and hope in my child, I found myself constantly thinking of my vanished loved one, yearning for communion with him, and asking over and over again these questions:

"Shall the dead live again? Is there another state of conscious existence? If so, shall we know our friends in the future life, and commune with them in heaven?"

But search wherever I would in the

realm of matter, science and philosophy, I could find no answer. The mind would go searching away out on the *"rims of infinity."*

At length, as I mused with anxious heart and tear dimmed eyes, I heard a voice, as of a Heavenly comforter, saying to me, "I am the resurrection and the life: whosoever believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"

I said, "Yes. These unutterable soul yearnings for communion with my dear departed *must mean immortality,* and I believe."

A new strength was imparted to me and I was comforted.

CHAPTER II.

THE MEETING.

A LOOK BACKWARD, WITH THOUGHTS OF LOVED AND LOST ONES WHICH VANISH IN JOY AT THE APPEARANCE OF THE DEARLY LOVED HUSBAND WHO PASSED FROM EARTH LONG AGO. THE RAPTUROUS KNOWLEDGE THAT HEAVEN HAS BEEN ATTAINED.

Joy cometh in the morning. (PSA. 30:5.)

MORNING-LAND.

"Some day," we say, and turn our eyes
Toward the fair hills of Paradise;
Some day, some time, a sweet new rest
Shall blossom, flower-like, in each breast,
Some day, some time, our eyes shall see
The faces kept in memory;
Some day their hands shall clasp our hand,
Just over in the Morning-land—
O Morning-land. O Morning-land.

—*Edward H. Phelps.*

THE MEETING.

Swiftly my mind flew on down the past to my long illness. I had become an invalid. My physician had said that I was threatened with heart failure and must seek a more congenial atmosphere. So I journeyed Southward, leaving my dear little Edith with my home friends, and hoping that the change in climatic influences might restore my failing strength.

As the train rolled on over hill and dale, and changing scenery continually met my eyes, the world seemed very beautiful.

"If my loved ones were only here with me," I thought, "my happiness would be complete." It seemed as if their presence would not only revive my drooping spirits but could even regulate the action of my heart.

I looked about me. My fellow passengers, seemed, most of them, in buoyant health and spirits. Some were chatting earnestly, some laughing merrily. If they had any heartaches, they were perfectly concealed; and for a short time I seemed to enter into their joy.

"Yes," I said, "this is a charming world. How could it be otherwise? Did not my heavenly Father fashion it? And it is worthy of its architect and builder."

A friend had written to me before my journey:

"This is God's world, the diaphanous veil through which He smiles upon us and counsels us, the living garments of the Deity. Its beauty, its griefs and sorrows, and its sweet affections bind me to it with a three fold cord." It is right, I thought, that I should love what God has given me.

Then I began to question:

"Why does my heavenly Father who is no respector of persons, but who loves all His creatures with infinite love, lay His afflicting hand so heavily upon *me?* Why was my dear one taken from me? Why am *I,* too, tending toward the grave?

This thought filled me with direful apprehensions. Life even with its shadows, seemed most desirable, and I felt it would be hard to lay it down so early. I resolved to do my utmost to arrest the disease which was preying upon me. I repeated to myself the lines:—

"Chance cannot bring this ill to me.
'Tis God's sweet will, so let it be.
He seeeth what I cannot see.

"There is a 'need be' for each pain,
And sometime he will make it plain
That earthly loss is heavenly gain."

As I stood wondering in the morning-land of beauty, these recollections passed before my mind as in swift pan-

orama; but the retrospection to my surprise now brought no sadness, no regrets, no sighs, no tears. It seemed as if I would not have had it otherwise. It was the sweet will of God: and His will, whatever it might be, was sweet to me now.

I remembered also that while journeying on the train, I had taken from my pocket a little book of Rowan's which had been given me as a parting gift, and I had derived much comfort from the beautiful thoughts it contained. This paragraph especially had clung to my mind:

"The loved ones whose loss I lament, are still in existence; they are living with me at this very time; they are like myself, dwelling in the great parental mansion of God; they still belong to me, as I to them. As they are ever in my thoughts, so, perhaps, am I in theirs. As I mourn my loss, perhaps they rejoice

in anticipation of our reunion.—What to me is still dark, they see clearly,—Why do I grieve because I can no longer enjoy their society? During their lifetime I was not discontented because I could not always have them around me. If a journey took them from me, I was not, therefore, unhappy. And why is it different now? They have gone on a journey—Whether they are living on earth in a far distant city, or in some higher world in the infinite universe of God, what difference is there? Are we not still in the same house of the Father, like loving brothers who inhabit separate rooms? Have we, therefore, ceased to be brothers?"

I had heard from friends many descriptions of the land to which I was journeying, but this in which I had awakened seemed so to transcend all that I had heard that I thought there must be some mistake.

"This cannot be the place for which I started," I cried, "but oh, whatever place it is, whatever its name may be, here let me stay!"

Just then I noticed in the distance a shining object moving toward me. As it drew near I saw to my amazement the form of my dead husband. His robe like my own, flowing, and white as snow, seemed to glow with the brilliancy of the sun. His face was the same dear face my precious one had worn before he left me, only it was more radiantly beautiful; and it was lighted up with the glory of God. A rare intelligence, more than earth-born, sparkled in his eyes.

He threw his arms about me, and as he smiled upon me, my soul was filled with rapturous delight.

"My darling one, Welcome Home. Good Morning!" he said.

It was the same voice that used to charm me in the days of long ago. His

WELCOME HOME, MY DARLING ONE! GOOD MORNING!

"Good Morning," recalled the time when we sat side by side reading our favorite lines from Mrs. Barbauld:—

"'Life. I know not what thou art,
But know that thou and I must part;
And when, or how, or where we met,
I own to me's a secret yet.
Life, we've been long together,
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather;
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, a tear;
Then steal away, give little warning,
Choose thine own time;
Say not 'Good Night,' but in some brighter clime
Bid me Good Morning.'"

"O my beloved one," I said, "'tis sweet to dream of you. This is a glorious dream. Oh, that I could dream on, and never more waken to life's sad verities."

"Dearest," he replied, "you are not dreaming. You are really with me, and I with you. Death can no more take me from your fond embrace. Did we not often join in singing:—

'We shall gather home at last—
We shall hold our jewels fast
In the Kingdom.'

"And, now, beloved, it is no longer a sentiment but a fact."

"Yes, darling. It is true of *you*. *You* have been taken home. The reaper Death came and gathered you with his sheaves, and to you death was the entrance upon the life eternal. But as for me I am still a child of earth; I have not yet attained the bliss of the purified. But this dream, this vision of you, will strengthen me for future trial and conflict. I can remain on earth, and labor, and suffer with more courage now that I have had this vision of you and your eternal bliss."

"Say not so, dearest. Your trials and conflicts, too, are past. You, too, have entered upon the eternal life. I heard you when you said: 'Here let me stay, while life remains.' Life, here, remains

as long as God's kingdom endures; and this is to be your abiding place."

"How strangely our dreaming perplexes us. We must *die* to enter the life eternal. I have not tasted death, and this can be only a dream."

"There is no death. Did you not hear the voice saying to you, 'Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die?' And did you not make answer? 'I believe.' You have passed the change mortals call death."

"How can it be? When did the change take place?"

"You remember you were journeying Southward? When your journey ended you were weary, with a heavy sluggish sensation at your heart. You wished for rest but could not find it. Pain and anguish came instead. Physicians were called. Friends were summoned, but they could not relieve you. You con-

The Library
BETHEL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
ST. PAUL MINNESOTA

tinued to grow weaker. Do you not remember?"

All at once it came back to me. I remembered but it seemed a dream.

"Yes, yes?" I said. "I was very ill. My breathing became difficult. The room grew dark. I felt a coldness creeping over me; but Jesus seemed to be very near, and His presence gave me great comfort, and lighted up the gloom. I could not hear the voices of my friends, but I could hear *His* voice saying to me:—

" 'Dear child lean upon me. I will not leave you. I am with you always,' and cradled in His arms I fell asleep."

"Yes, you fell asleep, and did not waken. Among your friends on earth it was said you had died from heart failure; but we knew you had conquered death and had entered upon life eternal."

I stood still taking in the truth in all its fullness. I was dead and my spirit

was with the redeemed. My husband, so long lost, was reunited to me. My Edith was still on earth, but for her my heart held no mistrust—not even regret, for my spirit's eye looked forward to the one eternal present. He spoke again:

"Did you hear the music of the harpers as you came?"

And I remembered the wondrous strains that had filled the air when I awakened, as with a great Hosanna.

CHAPTER III.

HEAVEN A PLACE.

The actuality of heaven. The perfect heavenly memory which holds everything once heard or seen or imagined. Bishop Foster's boyhood experience. Only the body dies, the soul with its personality remains. The thoughts of angels often express themselves in music.

"I go to prepare a place for you."
(JOHN 14:2.)

NOT THERE.

I cannot make him dead.
His fair sunshiny head
Is ever bounding round my study chair;
Yet when my eyes, now dim
With tears, I turn to him,
The vision vanishes—he is not there.

I know his face is hid
Under the coffin lid;
Closed are his eyes; cold is his forehead fair;
My hand that marble felt;
O'er it in prayer I knelt;
Yet my heart whispers—he is not there.

When at the day's calm close,
Before we seek repose,
I'm with his mother, offering up our prayer,
What'er I may be saying,
I am in spirit praying
For our boy's spirit, though—he is not there.

Not there. Where, then, is he?
The form I used to see
Was but the raiment that he used to wear.

AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

The grave that now doth press
Upon that cast off dress,
Is but his wardrobe locked:—he is not there.

He lives in all the past
He lives; nor, to the last,
Of seeing him again will I despair;
In dreams I see him now,
And on his angel brow,
I see it written, "Thou shalt see him *there.*"

—*John Pierpont.*

HEAVEN A PLACE.

Over and through the one great joy that I had passed the gates of death, that I still *was,* and that my beloved was with me, grew the thought that death, however it changed the body, made no change in the individuality. I had opened my eyes here with the same personality as when I had closed them on earth. The same consciousness, history, hope and memory were mine.

It was mine to live over again all the pleasant experiences of my earthly existence, and to enhance the surpassing joys of this immortal life by contrast.

As these brilliant-hued images crowded on the retina of my mind, all the beautiful memories of my life seemed to be thronging together, clear cut and vivid,

ready to be summoned by the merest act of will. I suddenly knew that the lassitude, weariness, and failure of the brain-cell was gone forever, and that all the past was as *now* to me; that not every experience alone, but every line of prose and every stanza of poetry, which I had ever read and enjoyed, had sprung instinctively and fresh in my living memory to be held there forever, a safe possession.

Nothing learned on earth had been really forgotten—it had merely slipped into the shadow, been overlaid and covered. And as the acts of experience and learning had moulded my individuality, so now the mass of these memories, great and small, made the individuality retained a million-fold more strong and pervasive.

The unpleasant experiences, the bitter trials, the heartaches, the mistakes, of the earthly life, these are recalled only as

they add to our joy by present contrast.

The afflictive dispensations which were so hard to bear on earth were all permitted and measured out to us by our Father's loving hand. These have added to our "weight of glory." And the mistakes—the errors and the sins have been cancelled by the blood of Jesus, and will come to us only as a glad remembrance of a debt long since paid.

Our heavenly Father has assured us over and over again, that He will remember them no more against us—that He will "cast all our sins into the depths of the sea," and "forgive our iniquities and remember our sin no more." "As far as the east is from the west so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."

"How far is that?" I once heard an earthly friend inquire. The reply was, "You take a measuring line and go east and I will take one and go west, and we will never meet again."

One memory stood out now from the mingled background: it was an experience related by Bishop Foster, when in the earth-life.

One spring morning, when he was away from home, he was awakened by a weird and strange sound that stole through the open casement and roused him. A sound that somehow thrilled more deeply into his soul than any other sound in mere animate nature. It was the cooing of a dove. It came borne in on the morning air, and he listened.

As he listened to its swell it choked him, almost broke his heart, and in a moment he saw a dove, on a broken limb of a walnut-tree standing by an old crooked lane, down by a worm fence; and he saw its bosom heaving as if its heart would break. He gazed at it. He was a little boy, standing on the yard-fence of his father's house. More than fifty years had elapsed since that event, but it

stood out before him that morning as if it had been but yesterday.

"By a strange law of association, starting with the early memory, he lived life over again. He went in and saw his mother, beautiful as she was in her young womanhood. She put her hands on his head, kissed him and soothed his childish sorrows. He bowed at her knee and recited his infant prayers again.

Then came early school days, and old playmates gathered about him, and old loves and joys, were lived over; creeks, hills, lanes, fields, and woods familiar to childhood, looked at him with their old familiar look, each alive and palpitating with precious memories. His cheeks were bedewed with tears, as the thrilling pictures with such strange vividness passed before him.

Voices of the long-since dead sounded on that still morning air; he seemed to hear them calling over the gulf of half a

hundred years as they greeted him in that long ago.

Then he was a young man. His college days were passed. The wide world was before him. With anxious and trembling expectation he was looking into the future, all uncertain of what might be its sorrows or successes. His horse was at the gate, his father's blessing sounded on his ear afresh, his mother's tearful farewell was repeated. He hastily mounted the horse and rode away.

Then opened to him the long journey of years up to that morning, stretching over seas, oceans, continents, almost the entire globe. Cities, towns, temples, museums, peoples, from every land which he had visited, rose up around him with minute exactness. He knew that he was the same self through all the changes of all the years. The same that spring morning, though gray and scarred, that

gazed with tearful sorrow on the moaning dove fifty years before.

His body had changed and many times vanished away, but he abided; the years had driven him from house to house, time and again, but they had not impaired him. That which abode was a spirit. Bodies changed and died, only spirit remained.

"Yes," my flying thought ran now, "bodies die. It is just as God intended." We must needs die, the death of the body is a physical necessity. Death must have been in the world long before man came. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," was not spoken of the body; it is spiritual death that is meant.

Adam and Eve did not die, physically, on the day in which they partook of the forbidden fruit, but they *did* die spiritually on that very day. Disobedience

brought guilt and condemnation, and they were driven out of Paradise.

They must have exchanged the material for the spiritual body even if they had never sinned. Man, if he had retained his Edenic purity, could not have escaped death forever. The work of creation was finished before Adam's fall. All the poisonous plants, fruits and herbs, as well as all the good ones were in existence. The germs of all the diseases that afflict mankind were living then, unless there have been new creations since.

Man was not created with infallible judgment, else he had not sinned. He was liable to make mistakes which would, in many instances, have resulted fatally, as they do on earth at present. It would have been possible for little children to drown even in the rivers of Eden.

Then, too, the forces of nature which men use, fire, steam, electricity, might

have caused death. Nothing but continued miraculous intervention could have prevented it. Even had this been exercised, earthly astronomers have long ago discovered that their planet—indeed that the whole visible universe—though a glorious garment is not an immortal one.

Sooner or later the earth must lose its energy of rotation and revolution, the sun wax dim and the conditions of human life, as we know it, cease.

No, our Heavenly Father did not design that we should remain always on earth. He has a grander and more glorious destiny for us. And, the mere physical pang aside, for those who love the Saviour, death has no sting. He comes as a servant, and not as a King. He opens the gates of immortality—unbinds the fetters that confine the soul, and it flies like a bird to the palace of God.

The pains that wait on Nature's dissolution—
The dying strife—
Are but the birth-throes of the spirit entering
Into eternal life.

As these thoughts passed through my mind, I felt my dear one's arms about me, saw the waving foliage in the translucent air, and smelled the rare perfumes of tree and flower. I raised my head from his breast.

"Then heaven," I said, joyfully, "is more than a *state;* it is a *place.*"

"It is both," he answered. "You know Jesus said: 'I go to prepare a place for you.' It is not all spirit. It is *matter spiritualized, refined.* It is a real world."

"Oh why," I exclaimed, "were we so prone not to speak of material things, or of material life in heaven. If one spoke of it as a substantial world, where mountains towered and oceans ebbed and swelled, where fruits and flowers made

fragrance and birds music, our words were called the license of poetry or the rhapsody of devotion. Yet here I find bright turf to walk upon, clear, sweet air to breathe, light to color all the perfect landscape, sounds more harmonious than earthly ear ever imagined, to gladden every sense. What a beautiful world!"

"Those flowers you see at your feet, dearest," he said, "are ever blossoming. Those hills in the distance shall never weary you to surmount. Beyond them other mountains rise more beautiful, valleys wind, rivers run musically onward and far beyond all, blue oceans forever heave and sparkle for your eyes."

I was silent for a moment, my mind reaching out to grasp the blessedness that wrapped me round. When I spoke again, it was in quaint words that I knew he would recall, since we had once read them together—a page of the diary of an old English clergyman.

"Shall we go to heaven with real eyes, but find no real light to gratify and employ them? Shall we go with real ears, and yet meet with no actual harmonies to salute them? Are we to carry the senses of smell, of taste, of touch, which are the inherent properties of our bodies, where the odor of no flowers, the fragrance of no sweet fruit, and the forms and fashions of no real objects will ever greet us?

"Nay, let not the substance of thy hopes vanish into this vain idealism. Heaven is a real world; we, do we ever get there, shall be real men; and the realities of an actual, substantial, glorious life will there surround and occupy us."

"And amid all these heavenly scenes, as we wander from vale to vale, or climb the flowery mountains, or wind along the banks of peaceful rivers, or stand musing on the wide ocean's shore, thought will be busy all the time, and such high thoughts as we never had before.

"Not only the qualities but the essence of all things will be plain. The close connections, the nice dependencies, the several links in the august chain of beings, as well as of causes and events, will stand out revealed. Memory, reason, imagination, every intellectual faculty will be fully occupied. These powers and every other susceptibility of our natures will be continually expanding."

He smiled upon me. "How did you know I was to come?" I asked.

"I was beside you when you fell asleep on earth," he answered. "I was near you many times while you were on your journey South."

"I think I felt you near," I said. "Sometimes I used to sing:

> "Sounds of sweet melody fall on my ear,
> Harps of the blessed, your voices I hear."

and often I thought I could catch the answering melody as it floated down from

your lips. You and I shall no longer have to listen across the spaces for answering echoes. We can unite our voices in Love's own symphonies. I have eternal life and *you!* I seem now to wish for nothing save our own dear child. But she will soon be with us!"

"I had been nearest to you in your earthly life;" he continued, "and it was given to me to be the first of all to meet you here."

"First of all," I repeated. "Then we shall see and know all our friends here?"

"All. And not only those whom we have known but the 'many' who shall come from the East and the West and the North and the South and sit down in the Kingdom of God."

As he spoke, I heard again in the distance an enthralling strain of music, music more beautiful than at first, like the melody of a multitude without number hymning to harps of gold. It rose,

swelled and died away, leaving behind it a quivering undertone as if the very air were stirring to recall the song.

"What is that?" I asked. "It is far more exquisite than when I first awaked. Is it the harpers now?"

"What you have just heard," he said, "is angelic thought. The ancients, you recall, thought that the planets, in their courses, made a perfect harmony which they called the music of the spheres. Perfection to them expressed itself in the form of melody. Though this was not true of the physical universe, it is a fact that *perfectly holy, loving thought* itself creates sweet melody; and when groups of celestial inhabitants turn their thoughts in a particular direction, they mingle in one strain of perfect harmony. But the grandest melodies of heaven that all hear, but none can imitate, you have not yet heard. They are the *thoughts of God,* roaming free through all the spaces

of the universe. When these melodies sound, all the eternal world listens, as, when the Seventh Seal of the Great Book was opened in John's Apocalypse, 'there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.' "

CHAPTER IV.

ON SPIRIT WINGS.

JOURNEYING IN HEAVEN WHERE THOUGHT AND WILL CONVEYS THE PERFECT BODY, SWIFTER THAN LIGHT. ANGELIC ATTENDANCE UPON SAINTS ON EARTH. THE EARTHLY EAR MAY SOMETIMES HEAR THE RUSTLING WINGS. A PLACE WHERE ALL LOST LOVE IS RESTORED, WHERE ALL PURE LOVE REMAINS FOREVER PERFECT.

"Who maketh the clouds his chariot and walketh upon the wings of the wind." (PSA. 104:3.)

NOT CHANGED BUT GLORIFIED.

Not changed but glorified. Oh, beauteous language
For those who weep,
Mourning the loss of some dear face departed,
Fallen asleep.
Hushed into silence, never more to comfort
The hearts of men,
Gone, like the sunshine of another country,
Beyond our ken.

O dearest dead, we saw thy white soul shining
Behind the face,
Bright with the beauty and celestial glory
Of an immortal grace.
What wonder that we stumble, faint and weeping,
And sick with fears,
Since thou hast left us—all alone with sorrow,
And blind with tears.

Can it be possible no words shall welcome
Our coming feet?
How will it look, that face that we have cherished,
When next we meet?
Will it be changed, so glorified and saintly
That we shall know it not?
Will there be nothing that will say, "I love you."
And "I have not forgot."

AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

Oh! faithless heart, the same loved face transfigured
Shall meet thee there,
Less sad, less wistful, in immortal beauty
Divinely fair.
The mortal veil, washed pure with many weepings,
Is rent away,
And the great soul that sat within its prison
Hath found the day.

And we shall find once more, beyond earth's sorrows,
Beyond these skies,
In the fair city of the "sure foundations"
Those heavenly eyes.
With the same welcome, shining through their sweetness,
That met us here;
Eyes, from whose beauty God has banished weeping
And wiped away the tear.

—*Author Unknown.*

ON SPIRIT WINGS.

Side by side we walked together. Spreading before us in every direction we saw beauty, such as mortal tongue can never describe. Love was everywhere; and everything that had life was full of joy. God seemed very near, though I did not see Him. I was conscious of His presence. I felt His breath upon me, imparting life, and love, and peace and power.

As we pressed on I said, "I remember how long, in its earthly pain and weariness, yesterday was to me. Hour by hour it seemed as if it would never pass."

He smiled. "Not yesterday," he said; "we do not measure time here by days or years. If you were on earth you would count the time you have already stayed here as about three days."

"Can it be possible?"

"Come with me once more, Darling," he said. "Let us take a glimpse of God's great universe."

He drew me closer and with his arm around me, we glided from that world of beauty and delight, out into space. On we flew with the swiftness of light—a flight that caused no weariness or effort. Time itself seemed to be annihilated.

And this is possible because the body is *spiritualized through and through.*

"It has become," as Theodore Chriestlieb put it, "an adequate expression of the spirit, and its willing instrument. The body no longer opposes its own laws (of space, gravitation and motion) to the volitions of the spirit, it does not hinder nor limit them, but implicitly obeys. All strife is at an end. If the spirit will to transport itself to any place, it can do so together with the body; the body no longer hinders it for it is

saturated with vital force and immortality." We have what the scriptures call a spiritual body.

You remember that when Jesus was on earth His disciples went down into the sea. And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew. When they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, toiling in rowing, they were discouraged and afraid. Jesus came unto them and said: "Be not afraid." Then they received Him into the ship; *"and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went."*

As we went, we passed a convoy of celestial spirits returning from an errand of love. They had been sent by the Redeemer, to minister to those in sorrow.

"O!" I said to the dear one at my side. "I did not know that Heaven and earth were so closely united. When I read in God's word: 'But ye are come unto an innumerable company of angels,' I used

to wonder what it meant, and if angels really did attend the saints of earth."

"Yes!" he answered, "they always have attended them. Though unseen, they strengthen, support, and cheer in times of adversity, minister comfort in woe, as in Christ's agony in Gethsemane, 'there appeared an angel unto Him from heaven strengthening Him.' "

"On earth," I said, "I sometimes heard of persons, who, when dying, thought the angels were near. Do they minister on such occasions?"

"Yes! very often."

"I remember," I said, "an incident once told me by my pastor.

"He had an acquaintance, B., a devoted Christian, who enjoyed the consciousness of his acceptance with God. He lived a happy, joyous life. A friend of B.'s whose life was an exceptionally pure and noble one, was nevertheless

troubled with doubts and fears which kept him in a state of despondency.

One morning, the former died very suddenly, before any had heard of his illness. His friend was out in the field when suddenly an overwhelming power came upon him. He thought he heard the rustling of pinions, and a great joy filled his soul. Every doubt and fear was gone, and his joy was unspeakable and full of glory. With it came the assurance that the angels had come for B. He went to the latter's house and asked:

"B. is dead, is he not?"

"Yes," was the reply.

"He died at six o'clock this morning?"

"Yes, how did you hear of it?"

"I knew it, for I heard the rustle of the angels' wings as they came for him."

Ever after his heart was overflowing with peace and joy.

"That," said my husband, "is only one of the multitude of instances that are con-

stantly occurring. Joy in heaven, is increased by ministering to others—most of all by ministering to the sorrowful and suffering of earth. This is the service most loved and desired among us, and we have the privilege of engaging in it very often. If on earth we have had a peculiar love for any special service with but few opportunities to carry out the desire of our hearts, here we have time and opportunity to develop all the pure and noble impulses that we have felt in our earthly lives."

These spirits were singing in the sweetest strains, a song with which on earth I had been familiar.

"The sweetest lives are those to duty wed,
Whose deeds both great and small,
Are close-knit strands of one unbroken thread
Where love enobles all.
The world may sound no trumpets, ring no bells,
The book of life the shining record tells."

As they sang, love illumined their faces, and beamed from their eyes. A new

thought took possession of my heart. "Can it be possible that in heaven not alone the results of the deeds we do, but even the words we utter, like that song of Mrs. Browning's, are destined to live after us, and with us eternally?"

Yes. It is true. All the pure, the ennobling, that enters into the earthly life, assimilated by our purified natures, is carried with us to our eternal abode, to blossom and bring forth fruit through all the endless ages that are before us. I remember when on earth a friend once asked me if I believed the smallest act of ours left its indelible impress upon our characters: that we never wrote a letter, or exchanged a salutation without leaving an ineffaceable mark upon our souls forever.

"It cannot but be true," I answered. "The photographer tells us if we will sit before his camera a moment he will give us a correct picture of ourselves. When

we arise we look in vain for the picture upon the plate; but the master artist subjects it to a chemical process, when lo, the picture appears perfectly printed by the sun; too perfectly sometimes, so that the artist is required to soften a line here, and subdue a shade there, before his patron looks with complacency upon it.

So for a "little moment," as the sacred writer terms it, we are placed before the camera of eternity. We do not see the impressions made. All unconsciously we act, think and speak. The curtain falls —the picture is done.

The master developes it, and in eternity it stands forth. He will make no changes. He will soften no lines, subdue no shadows, make no false representations, but every line of beauty which the soul possesses he will bring out. All the impressions made by the acts of kindness and words of love, and even the cup of

cold water given in the name of a disciple, will never be effaced.

No, there is no loss in heaven of anything. Least of all is there loss of love. Every love that lived on earth, if pure, lives again, reduplicated here. As I pondered this thought in my heart, I seemed to hear again the words of an honored minister of Christ whom I had known in the earth life, an earnest searcher after the unseen:

"Conjugal love, and filial and parental love, in their highest purity, are God's blessed gifts to man in his earthly life; but they are of earth. There is a love that is celestial and without earthly alloy. The two affections grow often together. When we say that the *peculiar* love does not carry over, we do not mean that there is not a deeper, and holier love uniting souls in the life beyond who were so related in this life.

Whatever may be the common loves of

all holy beings in eternity—and it is our belief that love is the very essence of heaven—we cannot doubt that those whom we have loved most here, loved mose purely and tenderly, will be likely to be dearest to us there. They will still be our treasures. All that they ever were to us will still be remembered; the hold they had on our being will still be felt in more exalted forms. The noble passion, purified from all alloy, will rise into far grander and more ravishing intensity. The imperfect earthly love will be transformed into the perfect heavenly."

When these words were uttered, they were conjecture—anticipatory. He who had thus spoken, long ago joined the ranks of the Redeemed, and is now a citizen with me, of this glorious country. He knows *now* by experience, what all the inhabitants of heaven know—*that it is all true.* That love *is* the very essence of heaven; for God is love, and His spirit

permeates the place. Those we loved on earth are doubly dear to us here, and are more to us than they could possibly be anywhere outside of heaven.

My husband, God had now restored to me. How I had yearned for his companionship ever since he left me. How often an ache had come into my heart, and tears bedimmed my eyes as I thought that our companionship on earth had ceased forever. Now the longing, the bitterness, the sorrow was forever ended.

> "Hope is changed to glad fruition,
> Faith to sight, and prayer to praise."

Even though separated by space, we could hereafter communicate at will through all eternity, and no time or change could ever deprive us of each other's presence.

Best of all, I knew that I was at home in my heavenly Father's house, I who was so unworthy, and had been so unfaithful

that often I had hardly dared to look heavenward, but in secret prayer bowed in humility and contrition, and like the publican said:—"God be merciful to me a sinner."

I used to sing on earth:—

"If peace be in the heart,
The wildest winter storm is full of beauty.
The midnight lightning flash, but shows the path of duty.
Each living creature tells some new and joyful story,
The very trees and stones all cast a ray of glory,
If peace be in the heart."

This wonderful peace now came into my soul. I knew that I was "forever with the Lord," not because of works of righteousness which I had done, but according to His mercy who had saved me.

CHAPTER V.

DUST TO DUST.

A FLIGHT TO EARTH, WHERE THE FREED SOUL, WATCHES THE LAST RITES ABOVE HER EARTHLY TENEMENT. THE SPIRIT'S PITY FOR THE GRIEF AND TEARS OF THOSE LEFT BEHIND.

"She is not dead, but sleepeth."

(LUKE 8 : 52.)

LEONA.

Leona, the hour draws nigh,
The hour we've waited so long,
For the angel to open the door in the sky,
That my spirit may break from its prison and try
Its voice in an infinite song.

I wonder why spirits can cling
To their clay with a struggle and sigh,
When life's purple autumn is better than spring,
And the soul flies away like a birdling to sing,
In a climate where leaves never die.

Leona, come close to my bed,
And lay your dear hand on my brow;
The same touch that thrilled me in days that are fled,
And raised the last roses of youth from the dead,
Can brighten the brief moments now.

O come not in tears to my tomb,
Nor plant with frail flowers the sod;
There is rest among roses too sweet for its gloom,
And life where the lillies eternally bloom,
In the balm-breathing gardens of God.

AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

Leona, good by! should the grief
That is gathering now ever be
Too dark for your faith, you will long for relief,
And, remember, the journey, though lonesome is
brief,
O'er lowland and river to me.

—*James G. Clark.*

Absorbed as I was in these reflections, I had closed my eyes to the multitude of suns, with their whirling systems, through which our way had led. At my husband's voice I came to myself, with a curious sense of familiarity and yet surprise, to find that I was standing in my own Northern town, before the door of the house in which loving friends had striven to make my years bearable. The window blinds were closed and crape hung from the door.

"What does it mean." I asked. "Who of my friends have died since I went away?"

"Come nearer, he replied, "and you shall see all that we are permitted to know."

We entered, but not by the door. It

was not necessary. The barriers of earth were no longer barriers to us. We could glide through wall or ceiling as easily as through the air: and I remembered that it was said of Jesus, after His resurrection, that He came to his disciples, *the door being shut,* and said:—"Peace be unto you?"

The house was filled with people. Carriages were at the door. A hearse was in waiting. "Which of my dear ones were they burying?" This question arose in my mind, but somehow I felt no alarm, or sorrow. My soul was filled with love, and life and glory; and the companionship of the blessed one at my side gave me a joy unspeakable.

We entered the room where in a casket lay the form of the departed one. Beautiful floral tributes were there. We heard voices singing:—

"Who, who, would live alway, away from his God,
Away from yon heaven that blissful abode,

Where the rivers of pleasure flow o'er the bright
plains
And the noontide of glory eternally reigns? ''

We heard the scripture lesson read:—"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me:—'Write. Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the spirit that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

I noticed that while we saw all who were assembled, and heard all that was said, *they* did not seem to be conscious of our presence, even when we were so near as to touch them. My husband said: "Let us look at the sleeper in the casket. It will not disturb the services for we will not be observed."

As I looked, I saw to my astonishment *myself* lying there amid the flowers, surrounded by sorrow-stricken friends, among whom was my precious little Edith, weeping bitterly. But *my* heart

was filled with gladness. Even my darling's tears did not make me sad; and I wondered at the change that had come over my spirit.

I remembered, too, that when Jesus came to Bethany, and found Mary and Martha weeping over their departed brother, Lazarus, Jesus wept. *I* could not weep. Then I thought, "conditions are changed. Jesus then was still on the earth, where tears so often flow, but there are no tears in our heavenly world. But while there was no more sorrow, and no more tears for me, my interest in my dear child and my affection for her was stronger than it had ever been before.

"I would like to communicate with my darling," I said. "If she could know of the bliss into which I have entered how quickly she would wipe away her tears, and long for the day when she would be reunited to us. I have simply moved out of the old house into the new; and I

I SAW MYSELF LYING THERE AMID THE FLOWERS.

understand now the meaning of the words:—'If the earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.' I would like to tell my Edith that I am perfectly happy, and that my joys are eternal."

"No, dearest. It is not granted us to hold converse with those of earth who mourn us, else I had often communed with you during the years of our separation. Our heavenly Father will comfort her, and wipe her tears away in due time. These tears are permitted on earth that they may bring us nearer to God, and enrich the crown that awaits us."

Again I heard the scripture reading:—"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, which are temporal, but at the things which are not seen, which are eternal."

Strange it seemed to see my friends weeping over my still form, commiserating me, saying: "Is it possible that her life is ended so soon? Her sun went down in the morning."

How could they be sad when *I was so unspeakably joyful?*

"Beloved," said my companion, "have you not learned that as gold is tried in the fire, so, in these fires of affliction, the heart is purified, and made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light? It will soon be over. Then heaven's eternal bliss will recompense their pain. We can sometimes come to them, and comfort them in the day of adversity. They will be conscious of a strength imparted, though they may not recognize God's messenger who brings it. 'For are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation?' "

As we turned from the scene and took

our flight from earth, I found my heart repeating a sentiment given me in my days of bereavement, and which I now fully appreciated.

"O sad-faced mourners, who each day are wending
Through churchyard paths of cypress and of yew
Leave for to-day the low graves you are tending,
And lift your eyes to God's eternal blue."

CHAPTER VI.

IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE.

A JOURNEY TO STUDY THE MYSTERIES OF GOD'S WONDROUS UNIVERSE. IS HEAVEN FOR THE INHABITANTS OF EARTH ONLY? ARE THERE OTHER BEINGS AND ARE THEY LIKE US? HAVE OTHER WORLDS SINNED AND DO THEY NEED A REDEEMER? IN THE INFINITY OF SPACE ARE THERE OTHER HEAVENS? HOW GOD WILL REVEAL THE FATHER TO THE BEINGS OF ALL WORLDS.

"When I consider thy heavens." (PSA. 8 : 3.)

SIDE BY SIDE.

Side by side are we still, though a shadow
Between us doth fall;
We are parted, and yet are not parted,
Not wholly and all,
For still you are round and about me
Almost in my reach,
Though I miss the old pleasant communion
Of smile and of speech;
And I long to hear what you are seeing,
And what you have done
Since the earth faded out from your vision
And the heavens beyond.
Since you dropped off the darkening fillet
Of clay from your sight
And opened your eyes upon glory
Ineffably bright.
Though little my life has accomplished
My poor hands have wrought
I have lived what has seemed to be ages
In feeling and thought.
Since the time when our path grew so narrow—
So near the unknown
That I turned back from following after,
And you went alone.

AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

For we speak of you cheerfully always,
As journeying on;
Not as one who is dead do we name you
We say you are "gone."
For how could we speak of you sadly,
We, who watched while the grace
Of eternity's wonderful beauty
Grew over your face.
Do we call the star lost that is hidden
In the great light of morn?
Or fashion a shroud for the young child
In the day it is born?
Yet, behold, this were wise to their folly,
Who mourn, sore distressed,
When a soul that is summoned, believing
Enters into its rest.

—*Phoebe Carey.*

IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE.

In our swift flight, I fell to pondering the mysteries of the heavenly world. As I lifted my questioning eyes, my dear one by my side smiled upon me with celestial sweetness.

"Dearest," I said, "you have been here much longer than I, and have learned many things of which I have as yet no knowledge. Tell me, is this heaven for the inhabitants of earth only, or do other people from other worlds of God's creation come here also?"

"This heaven," he replied, so far as I have been able to learn, is intended for the inhabitants of our entire planetary system. All of the worlds revolving around our sun are created for habitation; and as each becomes fitted to sustain

life upon its surface, God covers it with vegetable life, and peoples it with animated, sentient, intelligent beings. But these things our heavenly Father leaves for us to find out for ourselves, by study and research.

"Some of these planets, as we learned on earth, are much larger than our own world, and far exceed it in beauty and glory. Jupiter is as you know, fourteen times larger, and journeys around the sun bearing millions of inhabitants. Then we have Saturn, with its belts like an eternal rainbow, on which the rays of light produce indescribably brilliant effects.

"The inhabitants from these beautiful worlds are constantly coming to us,—joining our circle, and you see *heaven is large enough* to take them all in."

"True. But are they like us in their own worlds? Do they dwell in human form?"

"Yes, with certain difference," he replied, "our heavenly Father adapts their forms to the varied conditions of the worlds they inhabit. They all pass through the change which we call death. Change and decay come to all forms of life, but when they drop their material bodies, and take on the spiritual, then we are one in spirit for conditions in all spiritual life are alike."

"This is new to me," I said. "I always thought of heaven as for our world alone."

"Yes," he replied, "and when we were children we thought of our earth as the only world in which intelligent beings lived, and conceived of God's care as confined to our world only. But as we increased in years, we learned more about the stars. We discovered that while God arranged and placed them so as to give light to us, they were themselves, multitudes of them, larger than our earth.

Then we began to wonder if they were inhabited. Now we know they are."

"I cannot understand," I questioned, "how some of these worlds can be fit for habitation. Some are so *near,* and others so *far* from the sun's light and heat. Beings such as we are could not live in the temperatures that this implies."

"True, but our Father, whose creative power formed those worlds, and set them at their respective distances from the sun, knows how to constitute the atmosphere so that those planets farthest from the sun may absorb a greater portion of the solar heat, making their temperature moderate, while those at less distances having little or no absorptive power, may utilize only sufficient heat to render them temperate also. But of these things we do not as yet know: we only know that some are inhabited, and others are being prepared for habitation by intelligent

and happy creatures of our Father's care."

"How delightful," I exclaimed, "is the thought. And how inspiring the privilege of intercourse with them as time rolls on, to learn from them the things that have so long been concealed from us. We can at any time draw near and look in upon these worlds, and make them a field for delightful study of God's works, but we cannot communicate with the inhabitants until they, too, drop the material, and enter the spiritual life.

"In earthly schools," he continued, "we used to talk of astronomy, geology, botany and natural history; now we speak only of the creative power of God. All is comprehended in this. We do not make mistakes in our calculations, or conclusions with regard to the other worlds. The knowledge we so ardently longed for is imparted freely; and we gather *facts,* and not mere theories. We can continue

our investigations through all eternity, and while we are constantly gaining information concerning the marvelous works of God, we can never finish our researches; there will always be something better, and more absorbing farther on."

"The infinitude of space," he went on, "filled with monuments of the creative power of the Omnipotent, is no less a wonder now than it used to be on earth. It is more so, as we are able to understand the secrets of the Lord which He is pleased to reveal to His saints in glory. However, He lets us find out all we can for ourselves.

"You remember C— who was a pupil of Agassiz in Natural History? He told me this incident. The great teacher had led him step by step up to a place where he must investigate for himself. He had told him some things he would find by so doing, but did not tell him all

he would find. He left it for a glad surprise for his pupil.

"One morning C— came excitedly to the teacher saying:—'Professor Agassiz, see what I have found. I have really made a wonderful discovery. Look! See if I am right!'

"The teacher stepped behind him and said, as if transported with joy:

" 'O, my son, did you really make that discovery? It is *wonderful, wonderful,* my boy!'

"In a moment, however, from an expression on Agassiz's face, C— thought it was not a new discovery to his teacher and he said:

" 'O, Professor! I see you knew all about it!'

" 'Yes, my son,' said Agassiz, 'but if I had told you about it beforehand you would have missed the pleasure you find in discovering for yourself.'

"So our Heavenly Father lets us in-

vestigate and discover rare truths through all eternity."

"Then," I said, "if this Heaven was prepared only for the inhabitants of our planetary system, as there are other systems of worlds there must be other heavens, must there not?"

"That question," he replied, "is an absorbing one, and very naturally comes to us. So it is ever here. As we continue our research, and discover new truths, new questions continually arise with regard to realms farther out in God's infinity. We discovered while on earth that there were other suns than ours—multitudes of them. The myriad stars that shine on the earth, are, most of them, *fixed stars*, as we used to call them, that is suns, differing in size and brilliancy. Our nearest star, Centauri, as we call it, is much more brilliant than our sun, and gives four times as much light. Another, Vega, gives forty times as much light,

Sirius, fifty times, and Arcturus two hundred times as much.

"These are but four out of eight thousand visible to the naked eye on earth; now with their telescopes the inhabitants can see *eighty millions* and can make photographs of the Milky Way, which makes visible more than five hundred millions.

"And this is only the gateway of the starry hosts. On and on, through the immensity of space, these suns revolve on their ceaseless rounds, each the center of a system of worlds like or *unlike* our own.

"The thought of one heaven for all the inhabitants of the entire universe of worlds is bewildering. If this were so there could be no home, no place prepared for us. There must be a heaven for each system and this beautiful heaven of ours is the place Jesus has prepared for us that we may be at home here in our Father's house. In the endless

duration before us, God may permit us to visit these different realms as on earth we visited different cities and countries; but this we have not ascertained as yet.

"We are often filled with delight at the thought that we now have infinite facilities for observation and research, and untrammeled by earthly fetters, may discover all that is truth for ourselves. Nor are we retarded in our study of astronomy for want of greater lenses as on earth: our sight is perfect. We do not see through a glass darkly but we see clearly."

"Questions still crowd upon my mind," I said. "What about the salvation of other worlds? Have the inhabitants all sinned like us, and will our blessed Saviour continue His redemptive work? Will He visit those countless worlds, and go through the tragic scenes of Calvary over, and over again eternally?"

"No, you remember it was written:

'Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him.' We used to sing:—

'Jesus died, yet lives forever,
No more to die.'

This is true. He will never die again. We see Him in His glory, and He will appear in His glorified spiritual body, among the saints of earth in heaven forever."

"While He appeared as a man on earth, He was the *God man* co-equal with the Father. He is therefore omnipresent. It is His mission to reveal the Father to the inhabitants of the universe: and while appearing to us here in the same human form He wore on earth, He may assume to the inhabitants of each other world the form they themselves wear and show them God's omnipotence, wisdom and love.

"Sin may never have existed in other

worlds, and if not, their inhabitants do not need a Saviour, but only a Christ to reveal the Father. We read in the Bible: 'No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.' Christ will show all other worlds the Father in His glorious character and loveliness, and draw all souls unto Him.

"There is time and space for all this; the universe is so large, and eternity so long that God can be revealed, and known and loved by all His creatures."

"Will these worlds," I asked, "exist forever in their present condition? Or will they be changed?"

"All worlds must come to an end. Like earthly machinery, all will run down, but God is constantly making over and creating anew. Not increasing the bulk of the material universe, for that is perfect: else the machinery would be im-

paired by weight, or lack of weight; and there can never be more or less. God will make new heavens and earth, from the same material. Matter is indestructible, is never worn out, or diminished in power or possibilities. It is not God but it is the medium through which God has in all the past, and will in all the future, reveal Himself to His creatures."

"If all the spheres in the universe are running down," I asked, "doomed to come to an end, how can the heavens be eternal? Can they abide forever?"

"Yes, they are a different order of creation, above and beyond all else. They never grow old nor wear out. The Eternal Source of all life, and power, permeates them with His own energy, and glory, and as long as God's kingdom endures they will remain."

"I need not have asked the question," I said, "for I know we are eternally safe, but I thought it possible that God had

planned to remove us to some other sphere in His own good time."

"No, heaven is our abiding place. It is Home."

"Yes, and a thousand times sweeter than our home on earth. I realize this so fully since I came. It is so like earth, and yet so *unlike* it; could we there have caught a glimpse of this world we would have lost interest in our earthly home, would long to quit the house of clay for a more glorious abiding place, and an everlasting habitation. We would have been all the rest of our lives, homesick for heaven."

"Once, when on earth," my husband said, "in Switzerland, I climbed a mountain called *Heimweh Fluh*—the 'Homesick Mount,' an elevation from which one had a most picturesque view of the whole valley of the Interlaken, its lakes, fields and villages, and the snow-capped peaks beyond. The mountain is so called

because it is the last the traveler usually ascends before bidding the country farewell. Satiated with sight-seeing, his thoughts gradually turn to the friends left behind, the dear ones of his heart awaiting his arrival home. He looks from the Homesick Mount murmuring with the Patriarch Jacob, 'Send me away that I may go into mine own place, and to my country.'

"We found, as we journeyed through the earthly life, more than one Homesick Mount, whereon our souls yearned for rest, and companionship with those who had passed into the skies, and where instinctively we lifted longing eyes to the eternal city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God!"

CHAPTER VII.

ANGELIC COMPANIONSHIP.

Heaven made more luminous by shining retinues of angels. Angels are not redeemed spirits, but a distinct order. Many orders of intelligent beings are holding relationship to man. Are angels the oldest of God's creation? Does their creation continue? How many angels are there? They bring comfort to mortals and sometimes conduct departing spirits to heaven. Instances of their appearing to the dying. Their life in the presence of God, and their intercourse with the spirits of the redeemed. A remarkable experience of the famous Dr. Payson.

Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.
(HEB. 1:14.)

ALL HAIL ETERNAL LIFE.

Wherefore be sad though o'er thy frame come stealing
Disease and pain;
Thine own mortality to thee revealing?
To die is gain.

The pains that wait on nature's dissolution—
The dying strife—
Are but the birth-throes of the spirit entering
Into eternal life.

Then wherefore tremble as ye near the river,
And fear to launch away?
What we call death is but the glorious dawning
Of an eternal day.

A day beyond the valley of the shadow—
That knows no night—
But where the ravished soul is ever finding
Some new delight.

If then in youth, or when my head be hoary,
Earth's ties be riven,
I know that sudden death is sudden glory
To heirs of heaven.

AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

The traveller's glad when weary with his journey
The end to see.
If short the way that leads to joys immortal
'Tis gain to me.

To dwell in bliss with Christ, my Elder Brother
Is better far
Safe in his arms, no fears can ever enter
My peace to mar.

Then farewell earth with all thy grievous burdens,
And welcome rest!
Welcome my long lost kindred who await me!
All hail ye blest!

Farewell to doubt and fear, decay and darkness;
Farewell to pain and strife.
Welcome my Father's house—the many mansions!
All hail eternal life!

—*Mary Sparkes Wheeler.*

ANGELIC COMPANIONSHIP.

I was seated one morning with a group of friends, on a grassy slope, overlooking the widespreading landscape, drinking in, in some measure, the entrancing beauty of the scene, when a shining retinue of angels passed us. The light that streamed from them for a moment seemed to make even heaven itself more luminous;—a little as it used to be on earth when the lightning flashed in upon us, only there is no darkness here to show by contrast its brilliancy.

One of our company said: "We used to sing on earth—

> "I want to be an angel
> And with the angels stand."

Many imagined that all redeemed spirits were to be angels. We had mistaken

ideas. We were told in God's word that we were to be *as* the angels in some respects, but not angels. Angels we find here are a distinct order of our Father's Creation."

"Yes," said my husband, who was reclining by my side, "God, who is infinite in power, wisdom, and goodness, has created many orders of beings to enjoy life and behold His glory. We seem to occupy a middle place in His creative plan. There are many orders above, and many below us in the scale of life and intelligence. Of those below, while on earth, science revealed much to us. The microscope showed leaves and drops of water to be worlds of animated beings, and brought to our eyes an infinitude of littleness. Of those above us we are continually learning as we see and commune with them here in our Father's house. Man was the master-piece of God's work in the world from which we came. We

were the highest of all terrestrial beings. but here we find other beings of superior intelligence, grace, beauty, and purity, who, though in no sense earthly, hold an important relation to us."

"I remember," said another, "that I learned on earth that Science had demonstrated the unity of the physical system; and had shown the dependence and mutual relations of each atom of matter; that one law governs the apple that falls from the tree, and the suns and planets that roll in the most distant realms of space. So here there are relations and dependencies among all the intelligences of creation. These relations were beyond our comprehension on earth, but we know now that all the moral intelligences of the universe are, by a mysterious chain, bound together as securely as the physical universe is bound by the law of gravitation."

"Are the angels the oldest of the sons of God?" I asked.

"It is probable that they are," he replied. "Doubtless they were created long prior to man, or even before those long geological periods which science assigns to the formation of the world. God said: 'Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding. . . . When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?' "

"These ministers of God, and servants of the Church seem to be great in number. Does their creation continue?" I questioned. "Are more continually coming as spirits come from earth?"

"I think not," he said, "I think there are now no new creations of angels."

"How great is their number then?" I asked.

"We do not know that," said my husband. "You remember even on earth,

before our eyes had looked upon them, we learned that David speaking of the ancient of days, said, 'Thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousands stood before him.' And again David said:—'The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels.' 'A multitude of the heavenly hosts appeared and announced the Saviour's birth to the shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem,' and Jesus Himself said His Father could send more than twelve legions of angels for His defence.

"Paul said, 'But ye are come unto Mount Zion . . . to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born.' These are indefinite, but show us that the number is inconceivably great. But what are finite numbers in comparison with infinite space—the vast domain of our eternal God, peopled with His creatures, and

crowded with the monuments of His power?"

What wondrous love and parental care I thought, the Father has manifested for us in giving us these celestial attendants. We remember it was written:— "For he shall give his angels charge over thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." How vigilant the guardianship of these pure spirits! How rich is the inheritance of God's children! How great the wealth of sympathy that is lavished upon them!

One beside me said:

"When in my earthly home I always loved to think of the angels and in the social meetings, I often joined in singing:—

> "Angels now are hovering near us,
> Unperceived they mix the throng."

"And I thought of Elisha, when a host of his enemies compassed the city with

horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him:

"'Alas! my master, how shall we do?'

"He answered, 'Fear not; for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.' You remember Elisha prayed, and said, 'Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see.' And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw; 'and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.''

"How often angels unseen by us, have cheered us in sorrow, and ministered comfort in woe; and in earth's darkest hours, when we were most discouraged, could we have had our eyes opened to discern spiritual objects, we would have seen the horsemen and chariots of the Lord all around us."

"How we longed to see them!" said another. "Next to the presence of Jesus, we longed for the presence of angels.

Though they differ from us men in many respects, having lived so long in this immortal world, and advanced so greatly in knowledge that we seem as babes in comparison to their maturity; still there is so much affinity that we love to be with them. Their presence is always a joy and an inspiration to us.

"How we used to long to behold them when we were on earth! How eagerly we read of all the descriptions given of them. Foremost of the sons of God—nearest the everlasting Father, highest in rank and greatest in mental capacity, sublimest in worship and most fervent in devotion, waving their wings of fire before the eternal throne!"

This had been my thought also, but here, the brightest picture of our earthly imagination fades into nothingness before the reality—the purity, glory, and sublimity of their real presence. They delight in doing errands for our king, go-

ing on missions of love, and often bear departing spirits away from earth, to this heavenly home. We are reminded of this in God's word. "And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom," and how many millions have they since conducted to the Paradise of God.

"The soul," said my husband, "is not left a stranger to wander alone in the wilderness of space, but angels bear it to its celestial abode. The infant departing from its mother's bosom loses nothing in tenderness or love in the exchange from parental to angelic arms.

"I remember," said one, "a friend who returned ill from the battlefields of his country. Some weeks before he died he told me an angel came to his bedside and conversed with him, saying, 'When it is the Master's will I will come for you.' One day when conversing with

friends he suddenly ceased to speak, and looking toward the window as though attracted by some unusual sight, he exclaimed, 'My angel has come for me,' and at once sank upon his pillow and expired."

"That reminds me," I said, "of an incident that came under my own observation; for redeemed spirits are often dispatched to earth on the same mission. We, ourselves, have had blessed experriences of this kind. A friend of mine, a young lady, intelligent, refined, finely educated, fell very ill. When her attendants were applying some outward application, she said, 'Put it on my shoulder where George held his hand.'

" 'But,' said one, 'your brother George is dead, he died a year ago.'

" 'I understand that,' she said, 'but George is here, and has been here for some hours, and his hand soothes the pain.'

"Some time afterward she rose in the bed and stretching out her arms exclaimed, 'Now, my dear brother George, you have come for me and I will go with you,' and at once her spirit took its flight."

"I have discovered," said another, "that these angels seem to dwell in the immediate presence of God, and are continually about Him." They sympathize with Him in all His creative and redemptive work. Like obedient and loving children in their father's house, they love what He loves, and poise on waiting wing to do what He desires to have done. Their employment and enjoyments are chiefly about the central throne of God's universal kingdom. There in the royal Salem of heaven, they gather around Him with the deepest reverence and love; there they praise His name, and do His commandments, hearkening to the voice of His word. How blissful it is to have

them for our companions, no longer unseen, but standing before us, with open face, resplendent with the glory of God!"

As I finished the sentence I noticed another friend beckoning to me, and I left the group still conversing and joined her. In her arms she carried large clusters of exquisitely beautiful flowers, which filled the air with their perfume.

"Let me share them with you," she said. "On earth the flowers unfold their petals, and exhale their fragrance in the presence of the sun; and we used to sing:—

> "God's plans like lilies pure and white unfold;
> We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart;
> Time will reveal the calyxes of gold.

My mind still full of the thoughts of our conversation, I said:

"How like these flowers were the lives of many we knew on earth, whose beauty faded from the eyes of the world before they had opened their close-shut petals.

"The world never knew them. It did not see the radiant beauty that lay concealed within their hearts; but transplanted to this more congenial clime, they bask forever in the glorious rays of the Sun of righteousness and are continually unfolding and expanding in celestial beauty and loveliness."

My friend quoted:

"O many a spirit walks the world unheeded,
That, when its veil of sadness is laid down,
Shall soar aloft with pinions unimpeded,
And wear its glory like a starry crown."

As we glided onward toward the place where the blossoms grew in great abundance, I met some to whom I had ministered on earth in their times of need. I had for the time, forgotten the ministries—they were so small, so unworthy of mention. But they had remembered every one of them, and reminded me of them as they greeted me.

I thought of the words, "Make to your-

self friends of the mammon of unrighteousness that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." This is now fulfilled. Jesus also smiled with peculiar joy upon these things, when we saw them revealed in His presence. As they clasped my hands, and spoke in joyful greeting, I seemed to hear the voice of Jesus saying, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto these, ye did it unto me."

Instantly I recalled a story once told me of a Russian soldier one piercing cold night, who paced between one sentry box and another. A poor working man, moved with pity, took off his coat and lent it to the soldier to keep him warm; adding, that he would soon reach home; while the soldier would be exposed out of doors for the night. The cold was so intense that the soldier was found dead in the morning.

Sometime afterward the poor man was laid on his deathbed, and in a dream saw

Jesus appear to him. "You have got my coat on," said the man. "Yes," answered Jesus, "it is the coat you lent to me that cold night when I was on duty and you passed by. 'I was naked and you clothed me.' "

"That is very beautiful," said my friend, "and we see illustrations of its truth here every day. Every earthly act of kindness and love is rewarded a hundred fold.

"On earth, you remember," she continued, "we could never give expression to the deepest thoughts of our souls. Language was inadequate. After our utmost endeavor to convey thoughts to our friends, we felt that the half was never told. Lyman Beecher used to say—'I am sick because I cannot reveal the feelings of my heart.' At another time he said—'If I could play all that I hear inside of me, I could beat Paganini.'

"Here in this immortal world, we have

no such difficulty. We are never misunderstood. We can give expression to any thought that enters our souls. As we make a joyful noise unto the Lord, and join in the songs of the glorified we vie with Gabriel when he sings. Yes! we outvie him—we strike a higher note, for he cannot sing Redemption's song. The angels were interested in the plan of salvation. They desired to look into it, but they cannot solve the mystery—cannot understand the wonders of redeeming grace.

"No, they cannot understand. They had no need of prayer—they had no sins to be forgiven. They veil their faces with their wings, and sing—'Holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty. Heaven and earth is full of thy glory,' but we touch a higher string, and with the 'great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindred, and people, and tongues,' we stand before the throne, and

before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in our hands and sing:— 'Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.'

"In every way," said my friend, "our heavenly joys are so greatly superior to our highest earthly pleasures, and many of them so different in character, that it is no wonder we long to convey to the dear ones of earth our heavenly bliss. On earth we often grew weary of the highest pleasures of which we were capable if they were of long continuance. They lost the power of giving us enjoyment. Not so here. These pleasures are everlasting; and their power to charm and delight increases with their duration."

"Our Heavenly Father," said I, "used often to give His children a foretaste of these joys on earth! The poet sings:—

"The men of grace have found
Glory begun below,

Celestial fruit on earthly ground
From faith and hope may grow."

"I remember the experience of the Rev. Dr. Payson, the distinguished Congregational Clergyman, who passed from earth in the vigor of his young manhood. He had been reading Bunyan's description of the land of Beulah, where the sun shines and the birds sing day and night. He said:

" 'I used to doubt whether there was such a place, but now my own experience has convinced me of it, and it infinitely transcends all my previous conceptions. I think the happiness I enjoy is similar to that enjoyed by glorified spirits before the resurrection.'

"In a letter to his sister written a short time before his death, he said: 'Were I to adopt the figurative language of Bunyan, I might date this letter from the land of Beulah, of which I have been for some weeks a happy inhabitant. The

celestial city is full in my view. Its glories beam upon me, its breezes fan me, its odors are wafted to me, its sounds strike my ears, and its spirit is breathed into my heart.

"'Nothing separates me from it but the river of death, which now appears but as an insignificant rill, that may be crossed at a single step, whenever God shall give permission. The Sun of Righteousness has been gradually drawing nearer and nearer, appearing larger and brighter as he appoaches, and now he fills the whole hemisphere; pouring forth a flood of glory, in which I seem to float like an insect in the beams of the sun; exulting, yet almost trembling while I gaze on this excessive brightness, and wondering with unutterable wonder why God should deign thus to shine upon a sinful worm. A single heart and a single tongue seem altogether inadequate to my wants; I want a whole heart for every

separate emotion, and a whole tongue to express that emotion.

"'O, my sister! my sister! Could you but know what awaits the Christian; could you know only so much as I know, you could not refrain from rejoicing and even leaping for joy.

"'Labors, trials, troubles, would be nothing. You would rejoice in afflictions; and, like Paul and Silas, sing God's praises in the darkest night, and in the deepest dungeon.'

"When very near the end, he said, 'My soul, instead of growing weaker and more languishing, as my body does, seems to be endued with an angel's energies, and to be ready to break from the body and join those around the throne. It seems as if my soul had found a pair of new wings, and was eager to try them.'

"Thus his spirit seemed floating and basking in the bright and joyful dawn of immortal life."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SHINING CITY.

Friendship enhanced by perfect understanding and the prospect of eternal communion. The absence of weariness or labor in the morning land. The first approach to the shining city, the glories which John knew not how to describe. The streets of the New Jerusalem, its citizens and the pleasures God has prepared for them. Music, art and literature in heaven.

"And the city was pure gold, like unto pure glass." (Rev. 21 : 18.)

JERUSALEM.

Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
  Thy streets of pearl and gold
Are trod by the blest feet of them
We knew and loved of old.
Their voices full of calm delight
  Steal through the radiant air—
Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
  Our hearts are with them there.

Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
  No gloom—no dark'ning night
Can ever reach thy bright abode
  For God is now thy light.
O sweet and blessed country!
  O many mansions rare!
Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
  Our hearts are with them there.

Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
  I see thy happy throng
With robes of white, and harps of gold,
  All jubilant with song.
O princely bowers! O land of flowers!
  O lily-beds most fair!
Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
  Our hearts are with them there.

AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
On thy securest shore
I hope to meet, and fondly greet,
The loved who went before.
O home of fadeless splendor!
O joys beyond compare!
Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
Our hearts are with them there.

—From Bernard of Cluny.

As my dear one talked I listened, letting the great fact of heaven take full possession of my soul. Like a child, first experiencing some new phase of earthly life, and gladdening its heart in its unguessed beauty, so my soul revelled in the promises of celestial things.

Time and matter had, for me, undergone the last supernal change. The lost was found. Death itself was chained. The Life everlasting which had claimed so many of those I had loved—among them my own sweet little sister, who died a year before my marriage—would now yield them up again, unchanged to my affection. I would see and know them now.

How much and variously we had dis-

cussed that great question on earth: Shall we know each other there? I had comforted myself often with the reflection that Peter, James and John, on the Mount of Transfiguration, knew Moses and Elijah, though they had never before seen them. Moses had died on Mount Nebo, fifteen hundred years before, and God had buried him, and it had been a thousand years since Elijah had shaken off the dust of earth in the wilderness of Jericho and ascended in his chariot of fire to the world of light. No accurate description of their features could have existed. But the disciples knew them instantly; and felt the blessed influence of their presence.

David said of his infant child, I remembered, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." It would have been no comfort to David to go to him unless he recognized him. I was one of those who clung to the assurance that

memory can never be annihilated. Against all doubts I had flung that passionate protest of Nelson's:

"Shall this reasonable expectation prove a delusion? Shall this longing desire never be gratified? Why then is it implanted in the breast of the bereaved and suffering? Would a being of infinite wisdom and love present this heavenly cordial to the lips of His afflicted, fainting children in this vale of tears, and then with cruel hand dash it away forever? This can never be the act of Him whose nature and whose name is love."

Now questioning was ended. My dear friends were all here. I should see Him. One friend yet remained on earth who had often said to me:

"To my faith it is as unfalteringly certain that death will bring me to those I loved, and bring them to me, as it is that it will bring to me immortality. If the one is true the other must be." I had

been the first to test this fact and to prove its truth.

More than this, the meeting with those whom I had loved on earth would give us mutual joy.

Friendship's joys are enhanced by the thought that they are eternal. There can be no more separation; and the company of the redeemed are pure. "Charity never faileth," and the love of the friends I meet here will never fail while the years of eternity roll.

I was reminded of what *Baxter* said while he was still a child of earth: His words found an echo in my heart just now. He said: "The expectation of loving my friends in heaven, principally enkindles my love to them while on earth. If I thought I should never know them, and consequently never love them after this life is ended, I should number them with temporal things, and love them as such, but I now delightfully converse

with my pious friends in a firm persuasion that I shall converse with them forever; and I take comfort in those that are dead or absent, believing that I shall shortly meet them in heaven, and love them with a heavenly love."

Earthly regard too often has its foundation in self-interest. Sometimes the discovery of new characteristics, or a lack of supposed virtues, makes the object seem unworthy of love. But the love that here binds the pure in heart will abide forever, and grow stronger with the passage of time.

Somewhere, I thought, my friends were waiting; perhaps they already knew of my coming. They might be very near —perhaps from just over the hill-tops yonder, one could see the pearl-gates of the Holy Jerusalem, whose vision John saw "descending out of heaven from God."

I looked up into my husband's face. "I want to see the city," I said.

Instantly, as if in answer to my exclamation, I seemed to feel all sense of bodily weight drop from me like a garment that is laid aside. I felt, rather than saw, mountains, rivers and wide stretches of landscape melt and slip away beneath me. The citizens of heaven need no carriages or cars, or any other vehicles or beasts to carry them. We have no need of wings. We walk for pleasure only, not to reach distances.

When we visit any distant place, we *will* to go. As on earth we moved our arms or lips, or as we spoke in obedience to our wills, so here we travel without labor or weariness. We are no longer bound by earthly conditions, as were our natural bodies. We go here or there, make ourselves visible or invisible—in fact, shape ourselves outwardly according to the eternal will.

While we journeyed, in the far distance, as on earth dawn strikes through the morning twilight, there grew a great light, more vivid and more brilliant even than the translucent atmosphere through which we passed.

"It is the light of the city," he said, and I remembered John's words: "For the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

As the light swelled and brightened we rose higher, till with its flashing rays all about us, we looked down upon the very streets of Jerusalem the Golden—the city for whose inhabitants there is "no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor any more pain, where the former things are passed away and where God has wiped away all tears from their eyes."

During my earthly life I heard a minister say:

"I was once called into a room, by a

friend who said, 'I have all the foundation stones of the Holy City, and the sun is shining. Come in and look at them!' I went with him. There they were, piled upon the table. The sun was shining upon them. O the magnificence of the scene! The room was filled with glory—all ablaze with the glittering, shimmering sheen—and with tears coursing down my cheeks I said: 'If these are but the foundation stones, what must the glory of the City be?' "

My eyes saw its glory but it cannot be told in any tongue that is known to mortal ear. It was one of the things that Paul saw which were "not lawful for man to utter." John tried in earthly phrases to convey an idea of its glory; he told of its light like a stone most precious, a jasper stone clear as crystal,—of its wall-foundations garnished with jewels, sapphire, emerald, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase, amethyst—of its twelve

gates of pearl, and structures of gold like clear glass.

But all his imagination, so full of glowing, colorful images was powerless in presence of the ineffable beauty of the actual city. No wonder that John, when he had heard and seen "fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed these things." For he was still a mortal untouched by immortality. I had eternal life, and saw with the eye of the spirit, yet the glory as we descended was well nigh over powering.

"In this city," I thought, "I have an eternal habitation. There are the many mansions of my Father, whither He went to prepare a place for me, that where He is, there I may be also."

Hand in hand we entered in at the gate, and joined the joyful throngs that moved in the streets. Soon we reached my own mansion, my "house not made with hands eternal in the heavens!"

I long to tell of my heavenly habitation—of the loveliness that has been lavished upon it. But earthly vocabulary is empty and meaningless. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man the things that God has prepared for them that love Him." As the splendid beauty of an earthly cathedral—the harmonies of its architecture—can never be conceived by the mind whose eyes are blinded from birth, so, to an infinitely greater degree, is the loveliness of this abode denied expression in human language.

But it is permitted to say that if in an earthly home there is a single grace or charm, whether of outer or inner beauty, that grace and charm, in the heavenly mansion is reduplicated a thousand fold. As our habits and likings on earth reflected our mental side, so here our habitations express our individuality. Each is as distinct as features are distinct from one another in the earth-life.

Each is filled with the treasures that we had laid up "where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt."

If treasures of art have given us joy in our homes of earth, they are here also in greater profusion. If music has delighted us, the act of memory recreates it in tangible melody. If we have loved literature (oh that I could convey an idea of what literature means here!) we have it in wider measure; for all the literatures of the world—of past nations and peoples, lost and buried in the forgotten dust of centuries—are open to our interest and inquiry.

No wonder Joseph Parker once said while thinking of his home in heaven—"O years, once so slow, now so quick; to my childhood long and tedious, to my manhood swift and urgent; fly, hasten, be quicker still; the quicker the years are, the faster rolls the chariot through the wilderness and brings me to my Father's house."

CHAPTER IX.

SEEING ELSIE.

Longing for the meeting with a sister who died in childhood. Bishop Bowman's experience when he "was not in the body." The coming of the longed-for one in the form she wore in the earth-life, which flashes suddenly into the grown celestial form she wears in eternity.

"And white robes were given unto every one of them." (Rev. 6:11.)

OVER THE RIVER.

Over the river they beckon to me—
Loved ones who've crossed to the other side,
The gleam of their snowy robes I see,
But their voices are drowned in the rushing tide.
There's one with ringlets of sunny gold,
And eyes the reflection of heaven's own blue;
He crossed in the twilight's gray and cold,
And the pale mist hid him from mortal view.
We saw not the angels who met him there;
The gates of the city we could not see;
Over the river, over the river,
My brother stands waiting to welcome me.

Over the river the boatman pale
Carried another—the household pet;
Her brown curls waved in the gentle gale—
Darling Minnie. I see her yet.
She crossed on her bosom her dimpled hands,
And fearlessly entered the phantom bark;
We watched it glide from the silver sands
And all our sunshine grew strangely dark.
We know she is safe on the farther side,
Where all the ransomed and angels be;
Over the river, the mystic river,
My childhood's idol is waiting for me.

AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

For none return from the quiet shores
Who cross with the boatman cold and pale;
We hear the dip of the golden oars,
And catch a gleam of the snowy sail—
And lo. They have passed from our yearning heart,
They cross the stream and are gone for aye;
We may not sunder the veil apart,
That hides from our vision the gates of day.
We only know that their barks no more
May sail with us o'er life's stormy sea;
Yet somewhere I know on the unseen shore,
They watch, and beckon and wait for me.

And I sit and think when the sunset's gold
Is flushing river and hill and shore,
I shall one day stand by the water cold,
And list for the sound of the boatman's oar;
I shall watch for a gleam of the flapping sail,
I shall hear the boat as it nears the strand
I shall pass from sight with the boatman pale,
To the better shore of the spirit land;
I shall know the loved who have gone before,
And joyfully sweet will the meeting be,
When over the river, the peaceful river,
The angel of Death shall carry me.

—*Nancy A. W. Priest.*

SEEING ELSIE.

As I looked out upon the wondrous city, I was filled with a sudden desire to see my parents and younger sister, who had passed from earth in the sweet purity of her childhood. There was nothing more precious to me than her winsome little self. And I had never suffered more bitter anguish than when she breathed her last in my arms.

Her suffering then brought vain questionings into my mind: "Like as a father pitieth his children." Does God pity her? Does He pity me? If so, why does He not relieve her? Why does He permit an innocent child to be agonized by death? I could not answer, but these lines came to me:

"Cruel seems the grain of sand
Forced within the sensate shell,

But a pearl is gendered, and—
Ah, you know the parallel;
Round our lives the water-swirl
Says and sings, "No pain, no pearl."

I had learned now how supremely true the poet sang.

Thinking of my little sister, I wondered much how she would look. My husband, I knew, had often seen her, and he had told me that she had been looking forward to our meeting. I knew that somewhere in the heavenly world where the pure in heart were congregated, she was living with God. But what name did she bear? What form was hers? What was now her occupation? I found myself repeating the familiar words:

"Day after day we think what she is doing
In those bright realms of air;
Year after year, her tender steps pursuing
Behold her grown more fair."

Years had passed since her coming to the Morning-Land. She must have

grown in stature and in experience—perhaps was now one of the brighter spirits that are closest to the throne of Jesus. And I hoped, to whatever heights of glory she had attained, she would come to me first in some shape that would remind me of the little Elsie I had known and kissed.

I remembered the experience of Bishop Bowman, when on his return from Japan, he lay ill of a fever which his physicians believed must end fatally.

"I seemed," he said, "to fall into a kind of ecstasy, when I actually did not know whether I was alive or dead. I imagined that I was on board a most magnificent ship and heard the captain say: 'Stop her,' which I thought to be the voice of my Divine Master, when my eighteen months old child, who had died twenty years before, came to me and said that she had heard that I was coming and had come to meet me.

"After some little conversation which I do not recollect, she said, 'Do you not think I have grown, Papa?' She then rose in a form of glory, which I had never before witnessed and never more expect to see until I die, and then returned to her usual state, saying that she had come in that shape to see if I should know her. She then said that many friends had asked after me and were awaiting my coming, and that an old lady and gentleman had taken her up and kissed her, saying that her papa was their boy.

"I then asked her where mamma was. She replied, 'O, she is off doing something for the Lord, but will be on the wharf to meet us on our arrival.'

"All this left an impression upon me by the magnificence of the surroundings, and it was a season of great preciousness to me. It seems to me that I have come back from the other world; and al-

though it is peculiar for me to say I was dead, it seems as if I was not in the body."

I had always believed, on earth, that he who passed through this experience had been very near to heaven, and I did not doubt that his daughter had really come to him.

I have learned since that, as in heaven love rules supreme, it was the very force of my love and longing to see the absent one that drew her to me. As I mused of her, I caught strains of the same delicious music that I had heard so soon after my first awakening. It seemed to come from thousands of voices and to fill all space with its melody. To my surprise I saw a multitude of children approaching me, all clothed in white garments. The song they sang was indescribable, save that it seemed to mingle in infinite variations the phrases:

"Suffer the little children—
To come unto me—
And forbid them not—
For of such is the Kingdom of heaven.

As they drew nearer they separated, the greater number passing, but a smaller group coming toward me. And I saw that the leader of the latter was my own little sister. She had been used to wear white on earth, but the white in which she was now clothed was like no white there. It shone with unspeakable brilliancy, as if spangled with gems reflecting the light of God.

Instinctively I put my hands over my eyes to protect them, as on earth one is obliged to do in the face of the sun. I had not yet learned that in heaven the eye not only has sufficient strength to bear all the light of this brilliant world, but that it rejoices in it as the ear rejoices in heaven's exquisite music.

I had seen nothing as yet, even in heaven to compare in any measure with

the beauty of that band of dear little ones. But most wondrous of all was the glory that rested on my sister's face. It seemed, as I gazed, to obliterate from my memory, every trace it had ever borne of agony or tears. I could scarcely conceive that they had ever entered into any portion of her earthly experience.

Elsie came running quickly to me and her arms closed about me in a fond embrace. "I am so glad," she said joyfully. "We have talked of you so often and never ceased watching for you. We knew you would come in God's good time."

Her comrades' arms were filled with flowers. They put them on my head, and in my hands and laid them at my feet, and then, breaking again into the same strain they had sung on coming, hastened to rejoin the larger company, leaving me alone with my darling, her arms still about me and looking into my face with

the same wondrous eyes, save that they were more luminous and ethereal, than I had known in the long ago.

We talked of all that filled our hearts, of our past earthly home and our present heavenly abode.

"Do I look as you expected?" she asked me as we parted.

"Yes," I answered, "but more beautiful."

"I came in this form," she said, "so that you would know me. But it is ten years since I was alive on earth. I have grown since then. You remember Longfellow's 'Resignation'? And smiling, she recited:

"Not as a child shall we again behold her;
For when with raptures wild
In our embraces we again enfold her,
She will not be a child;

But a fair maiden in her Father's mansion,
Clothed with celestial grace;
And beautiful in all the soul's expansion
Shall we behold her face."

DO I LOOK AS YOU EXPECTED?

"Would you like to see me as I am now?" she asked. Without waiting for my answer she, who had come to me there a little child with hand in mine, flashed suddenly into taller and majestic beauty the "fair maiden" whose countenance of wisdom and sublimity transported me with delight. As she passed from my view, I heard loved familiar voices, and turned to see my dear father and mother standing near, waiting to embrace me.

CHAPTER X.

CHRIST.

The consuming desire to see Jesus. This sight sometimes granted to the dying. The summons to His presence, and conversations with the angel messengers. The perfect loveliness of the transfigured Christ, the brightness of whose face is the light of the city. The throng of the redeemed of all climes and tongues and peoples. "I love you with an everlasting love!"

"We would see Jesus." (John 12:21.)

INTO THE WOODS MY MASTER WENT.

Into the woods my Master went,
  Clean forspent, forspent;
Into the woods my Master came,
  Forspent with love and shame.
But the olives were not blind to him,
The little grey leaves were kind to him,
The thorn-tree had a mind to him,
  When into the woods he came.

Out of the woods my Master went,
  And he was well content;
Out of the woods my Master went,
  Content with death and shame.
When death and shame would woo him last,
From under the trees they drew him last,
'Twas on a tree they slew him last,
  When out of the woods He came.

—*Sidney Lanier.*

CHRIST.

Amid the ecstatic joy of the beautiful morning, when I awoke to consciousness of the fact that I had entered upon my inheritance—Eternal Life, I constantly had a ravishing desire to see Jesus. Happy as I was in the meeting with my parents, I was anticipating a still greater delight—the sight of the King in His beauty. It surely would be, I thought, the culmination of my highest earthly hopes.

I remembered that He left the throne of His Father's glory for me; that He came down to earth, was humiliated, despised, rejected of men. I remembered His unceasing love and compassion for humanity; how He went about doing good; and how amid the agonies of Cal-

vary, He paused to speak peace and comfort to the penitent thief, and to say:—"To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise," and I remembered His triumph over the grave and His glorious ascension, when His disciples gazed steadfastly after Him as He ascended "till a cloud received Him out of their sight."

It had not been my privilege to see the face of the blessed Saviour as I left my earthly body, but I knew He often revealed Himself at the moment of death to those of His saints who yearned especially for a glimpse of His glory.

One of my own friends, who had passed away in the bloom of her young womanhood, had had this experience:

Her last day on earth was strange and wonderful. As life was ebbing away she kept repeating, "I want to see Jesus."

Her sister, thinking she meant, "I want to pass over to be with Jesus," said:

"He will soon come for you, darling, and take you to Himself."

She looked earnestly into her sister's face, and repeated:

"I want to see Jesus."

Her sister asked, "Do you mean you wish to see Jesus before you go?"

She whispered, "Yes."

Her sister then asked: "If God permits you to have a sight of Him, and you have strength to make it known, will you press my hand?"

Again she whispered, "Yes."

A few hours passed. She continued to grow steadily weaker, until the last respiration seemed to have been drawn. The physician, a personal friend, whom she had requested to remain till the end, said, "It is all over now." The pillows were removed, and they laid her down upon the bed.

Suddenly to their astonishment the eyes flashed open, the lips parted, and in

a clear, distinct voice she said with a radiant smile, "Now I see Jesus!" and immediately expired.

Such a blissful entrance to the eternal life had not been mine, and I longed now with an increasingly absorbing desire to come near to my Redeemer and to see Him for myself. Not that I was conscious of any need that I wished Him to supply, but my love for Him so impelled me that I felt I could no longer be wholly happy even in heaven without a sight of Him who so possessed my soul.

When dying I had been conscious of the presence of Jesus, had felt His arms encircling me, and listening to His voice, had fallen asleep. But as yet, I had not seen Him in His glory.

Thinking of the vast company of heaven who had attained wondrous heights of intelligence, purity and love, who had awakened in His image, and must be nearest Him because of their

likeness to Him, I thought that I must be content with standing on the outskirts, with looking through the shining throng at my Saviour. And if ever I can draw near enough to reach out my hand, like the woman of whom I used to read, and touch the hem of His garment, it will indeed be an unspeakable privilege.

Not that I needed to touch His garment to be healed of any malady whatsoever; for I was perfectly well. Every fiber of my body seemed to be invigorated with new life. Every respiration imparted new energy and strength.

While my parents were still with me the summons came. It was brought to me by three angelic spirits. They were more beautiful than those who had been inhabitants of earth; their robes flamed with light and their faces shone with excessive brightness.

One who seemed to be the leader, announced to me that they had been sent by

our Lord to conduct me into His presence.

I could scarcely speak for gladness. All greeted me as "sister," and I went joyfully with them. We passed along a wide way that quivered with music, and held other companies, large and small, guided by angels and proceeding in the same direction. As we went we conversed, and I told them of my longing.

"We have known Jesus for a long time," they said. "When the plan of salvation through the death of Christ was first devised we desired to look into it. We hovered over Bethlehem when the virgin mother first looked into the face of her infant son. We were among those who told the shepherds as they were watching their flocks, the good tidings of great joy, and with a multitude of the heavenly host we sang: 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace good will toward men.'

"We were always with Christ in His earthly life. We sustained Him in hours of suffering and temptation. In the night of His betrayal, when Peter would have fought for Him, but that He made him put up the sword into its place, we were among the legions of angels which Jesus said He could summon if He chose.

"I," said one, "was present at His resurrection. I helped to roll the stone away from the sepulchre, and at our appearance the keepers became as dead men. We told the two Marys when they came with their sweet spices to embalm the body, that Jesus, whom they sought, was risen. We have never lost interest in the plan of salvation; and there is, and ever has been, joy in heaven in the presence of the angels when a soul is redeemed through the atoning blood of Christ."

As he paused, I lifted my eyes to see a triumphant throng and Jesus—was in

the midst of them. We did not need even the angels to point Him out to us—we knew Him as soon as we looked upon Him. O the rapturous vision that met our eyes! exceeding in majesty, and glory any conception of human thought!

As I looked upon those radiant features, the ancient description said to have been written to the Roman Senate by Lentulus, Governor of Judea, came flashing through my mind:

"A man somewhat tall and comely, his hair the color of a ripe chestnut, curling and waving. In the middle of his head a seam parteth it, after the manner of the Nazarites. His forehead is plain and very delicate, his face without spot or wrinkle, beautiful with a lovely red, his nose and mouth of charming symmetry. His look is very innocent and mature; his eyes gray, clear and quick. His body is straight and well proportioned, his

hands and arms most delectable to behold."

But no earthly description could paint that perfect loveliness and majesty. His transfiguration, when "His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light,"—even that must have been far less in glory than the sight that now met our eyes. His crown flamed with an effulgence that seemed to transform my soul into the divine image and from which seemed to radiate the very fullness of God.

I knew now what Paul meant when he spoke of "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." I knew now why "they need no candle, neither light of the sun."

It seemed to me as the poet wrote:

"No sun arose—I saw no moon
Go paling through the air;
God's glorious presence like a sun
Was here, was everywhere.

It brooded o'er the flowery plains,
O'er all the hills it glowed;
If here I looked, or there I looked,
I saw the face of God."

In the throng that surrounded that Presence, I saw persons of every clime and nationality, who had recently arrived and had been filled with the same longing to behold Jesus. As I gazed, a great murmurous strain of music arose and swelled to a triumphant song. It seemed to be welded of all the holy songs of earth, and I knew that each glorified soul of all that innumerable company, each in his own tongue, but merged into ineffable harmony, was chanting, in the words John heard—that "great voice of much people in heaven"—

"Alleluia. Salvation and Honor and Power unto the Lord our God, who is worthy to receive riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and

blessing. Alleluia! Alleluia!"

As the song ended, I perceived that the guiding angels had departed, leaving the redeemed with their Saviour. We gathered in groups about Him. He extended His hands in greeting and smiled upon us and His presence filled us with supreme delight. He looked upon the joyous throng surrounding Him, with a loving kindness that encompassed every several individual, penetrating each inmost soul, with the holy assurance of His peculiar interest, and affection.

As I stood gazing upon Him I was surprised at my own emotion. Instead of being awed by the excessive glory and made painfully conscious of my unworthiness, I felt myself irresistibly drawn towards Him. I drew near and nearer till I stood at His feet.

Then He laid His hand upon my head, and said: "I love you, my child, with an everlasting love!"

CHAPTER XI.

NO AGE IN HEAVEN.

Eternal life the perfection of youth. No age or weakness or scars or decay; every energy is renewed and vivified. No strangers there; each inhabitant knows and recognizes all others. All tongues are understood. A talk with Mary the sister of Lazarus, and with John, the beloved disciple. The face of the Father seen only in the face of Jesus. The spiritual vision of God. The solving forever of all earthly puzzles, the knowledge of all whys and wherefores. Life but a bubble on the sea, and heaven an eternity of love.

"Thy youth is renewed like the eagle's."

(Psa. 103:5.)

YOUTH.

Yet grieve thou not, nor think thy youth is gone,
Nor deem that glorious season e'er could die.
Thy pleasant youth a little while withdrawn,
Waits on the horizon of a brighter sky.
Waits, like the morn, that folds her wing and hides
Till the slow stars bring back her dawning hour;
Waits like the vanished spring, that slumbering bides
Her own sweet time to waken bud and flower.

There shall he welcome thee, when thou shalt stand
On his bright morning hills, with smiles more sweet,
Than when at first he took thee by the hand,
Through the fair earth to lead thy tender feet.
He shall bring back, but brighter, broader still,
Life's early glory to thine eyes again,
Shall clothe thy spirit with new strength, and fill
Thy leaping heart with warmer love than then
Hast thou not glimpses, in the twilight here,
Of mountains where immortal morn prevails?
Comes there not, through the silence, to thine ear
A gentle rustling of the morning gales;
A murmur, wafted from that glorious shore,
Of streams that water banks forever fair,
And voices of the loved ones gone before,
More musical in that celestial air?

—*William Cullen Bryant.*

NO AGE IN HEAVEN.

I made one discovery at the moment when Jesus extended His hands to me. I looked for the prints of the nails which had pierced them on Calvary, but there were no wounds in them. They were perfect and exceedingly beautiful.

We see Him as *He is,* not as *He was.* We do not need to see the scars to remind us that He died for us: We can never forget it. There are no scars in heaven, no deformities, no defects, among all the immortal hosts. Those born blind on earth, here have sight; those born deaf are not denied hearing. The spiritual body is as the angels', perfect and flawless and abounding in life in all its meanings.

And this life wears all the perfection

of youth. There is no age in heaven. There are no tottering limbs, no dull eyes or heavy ears, no gray hairs; but all are clothed in vigorous strength and beauty. I have found here many persons whom I knew on earth, who had passed their three-score years and ten; their earthly sun setting, but their wrinkled faces turned toward the eternal city and their gray heads almost haloed by the golden rays from the opening gates. Now youth sits on their foreheads. The wrinkles are all gone. The new life overflowing the old, has renewed and vivified every energy.

I remember, while a school-girl, walking one early spring day through a little grove. The trees were all bare save a scrub-oak. Apparently very few leaves had fallen from it, and I wondered why it was so. A few weeks passed, and again I walked that way. I looked at the

little oak tree, and now not a leaf remained.

I could not understand it. During all the cold weather, when the rain and the snow had fallen and frozen on those leaves, and the rough winds had whistled through them; they had held their place; now, when the sun was shining and the breezes were gentle, there was not a leaf remaining.

I drew near to examine, and found that under the stem of every old leaf, a new bud was growing. It had climbed up, and out and its new life had absorbed and pushed off the old and worthless, and the whole tree was soon to be luxuriantly clothed in its new summer robes.

It is like that in this heavenly world. In marvelously greater measure, the new life absorbs and surpasses the old, and clothes the soul in the beauty and perfection of the new and never-ending springtime of youth.

In the throng that surrounded the Prince of Peace, each face shone with a surpassing effulgence. They had no need to speak their joy; their countenances told it. "Surely," I thought, "it was thus that Moses' face shone when he came down from the mountain whereon he had talked with God. This light and love and joy must be the inner reflection of the very presence and glory of Christ." And I knew too that my own face was shining like the rest.

Another thing, no one seemed a stranger to me—I had the sense of love and intimacy with all. Among those many thousands each individual I knew and recognized and rejoiced in his or her promotion as in the good-fortune of a brother or a sister. And as I realized this my conception of heaven again widened infinitely.

A friend once said to me on earth: "When I was a child I thought of heaven

as a beautiful place with golden streets, and pearly gates, and many mansions, where Jesus dwelt with white robed angels *who were strangers to me.* After a time my little brother died, and then I thought of heaven as a beautiful place with golden streets, pearly gates and many mansions where Jesus lived with the white robed angels, and my one little brother whom I knew and loved. But as the years rolled on and one after another of those most dear to my heart were taken away, I lost sight of the mansions, the golden streets, and pearly gates and thought of it as a place of love and friendship—not strange to me, but filled with those I know, and ruled by the Saviour of us all."

This was strangely and beautifully true to me as I walked amid that glorified company, seeking out those of whom, because of their close communion with our Lord, I had loved to read. Two of these

I spoke of—Mary the sister of Lazarus, and John whom Jesus loved on earth.

With Mary I spoke of that sad and joyful day in Bethany when the sickness of Lazarus had yielded to death in Jesus's absence, and when His return brought joy to the broken and disconsolate hearts.

"We did not doubt Jesus's love for our brother," said Mary, "and we knew of His wonderful power to heal, for He had cured multitudes of all manner of diseases. He never disregarded or rejected any who came unto Him, but all who believed on Him were healed of whatever diseases they had. So while we were anxious that Lazarus should be relieved of pain, we confidently expected that Jesus would come and rebuke the disease, and raise him up from his sick bed. But, we were bitterly disappointed because he did not come as soon as we expected Him. We were disappointed

that Jesus after He had heard of his serious illness, had stayed two days still in the same place where He was. When He came, Lazarus had been dead four days. We went out to meet Him and said:

"Dearest Lord, why did you not come sooner? If you had been here he would not have died," and as Martha and I were weeping bitterly, Jesus was touched with a feeling of our infirmity; His eyes filled with tears and we all wept together. The Son of God in tears! The Lord of Life weeping over the dead! No, His tears were not for Lazarus, but for *us,* who were sorrowing because of bereavement.

"When Jesus stood by the grave and with the voice of Omnipotence called my brother Lazarus forth, and restored him to us again, our amazement and *joy knew no bounds.* We knew then that we had not sufficiently trusted in Him, that we had been of too little faith, that His heart

was large enough for all humanity, and that His sympathy for every sorrowing one of earth is as wide and infinite as His love for us who have exchanged earthly griefs for the bliss of the glorified."

John, the beloved disciple, told me of the dark days that preceded the last tragedy of Calvary—the bitter hours of Christ's humiliation and sorrow. He told me how he had sat next Him at table, and leaned upon His bosom at the last love-feast before the betrayal and crucifixion—how he had seen Him, mocked, derided with the purple robe and crown of thorns, and spit upon. And he repeated Jesus's prayer for those He loved and left behind:

"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which Thou hast given me; for Thou lovest me before the foundation of the world."

WHEN JESUS STOOD BY THE GRAVE.

"Shall we see the face of the Father, also?" I asked.

"Only in the face of Jesus," he answered. "You recall that when the Saviour was on earth Philip said unto Him: 'Show us the Father.' Jesus answered, 'Have I been so long time with you, and yet thou hast not known me, Philip? He that hath seen *me* hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou "Show us the Father." When I lived upon earth, it was given me to write 'Not that any man hath seen the Father, save He which is of God, He hath seen the Father.' God is a spirit. He wears no form. None 'have heard His voice at any time, nor seen His shape.' "

"Yet His presence fills not only earth and heaven, but the universe," I said.

He answered me by quoting the majestic words of the psalmist:

" 'Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

" 'If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there. If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there.

" 'If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea:

" 'Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.'

" 'If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me.

" 'Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.' "

"In all the future cycles of eternity," I asked, "shall we never see the face of the Father?"

"I do not know," he replied. "I have been here nearly nineteen hundred years, as they reckon time on earth, and I have never seen Him, though we all have in our hearts the continual consciousness of

His presence. No one here has seen God at any time, but the only-begotten Son, who dwells in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him."

I said, "When on earth we described the blessedness of heaven, we spoke of enjoying God's presence, and of having the glorious vision of His face. But we meant His spiritual presence, for we were taught that 'God is a Spirit,' without body or form, but with infinite wisdom, power, and goodness."

"Yes," he said; "it is the purely spiritual glory of God in heaven that so delights us. As the light of the material sun diffuses itself through the earth, giving it warmth, and light, and life, and beauty—filling the atmosphere with its beams, so the presence and glory of our God fills this heavenly world, and the inhabitants walk and rejoice in the light of it.

"The spiritual manifestations of Deity

—the unveiled vision of His glory is ever present to the enlarged, immortal faculties of His children. The glorified humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was manifest in the flesh, ever abides with His saints, 'and this humanity, shared alike by the Redeemer, and the redeemed —this communion, this vision of God manifest in the mediatorial King, will be eternal.' "

"I think I understand now," I continued, "what is meant by seeing Him as He is. Not in any corporeal form, or figure, but such a sight of His glory as a pure spirit with increased powers of perception, and enlarged capacities is capable of.

"On earth our knowledge was limited. We could not understand the mysteries of God's providences. As Tillotson says, 'We were many times wrong in our conceptions of God; we could not reconcile one perfection of God with another. We

could not make some of His works accord with His justice and goodness. But now we see the harmony of all these, and that it was our ignorance which made us imagine any disagreement in them.'

"Now we know the whys? and wherefores? of our former trials, and bereavements. Mysteries are all explained, difficulties solved, and we are assured that all things have been working together for our good."

"It is true," he replied, "and now excellences rise to view in the Divine nature, of which no vestige was discoverable in His works. How glorious, how transporting is the sight, when we contemplate Him in the fullness of His attributes!"

This glory we shall behold forever. So Bishop writes: "We shall see the beauty of His person; the splendor and brightness of His understanding; the largeness of His love; His uncorrupted justice; His unexhausted goodness; His immovable

truth; His uncontrollable power; His vast dominions, which yet He fills with His presence, and administers their affairs with ease, and is magnified and praised in them by the throng of all His creatures."

Our earthly anticipations of having our loved and lost ones restored to us—of being reunited to them in heaven, is here realized in all its blessed fullness. The parents, children, brothers, sisters, husbands, and wives, who were followed, many weary years ago, by sorrowing friends, with bursting hearts, to the grave, we clasp anew in an eternal embrace.

But this happiness, glorious as it is,—the happiness of the father in clasping the son, on whom he thought to lean in old age; of the mother, in gathering to her bosom the babes which the remorseless grave wrested from her embrace; of a brother, whose quick eye was the first to mark the hectic brighten on the cheek of

a gentle sister, ere it turned to ashy paleness, when he looks upon the angelic beauty of her glorified form—this happiness, I say, will be as nothing in comparison with the delight of being in the presence of God and the Lamb, and seeing the pure spiritual glory of His face.

For a long time, after these conversations, I mingled with the beautiful throng, greeting, conversing and listening as one or another told me of the past earth-life, some whom I had known there, others whom I had never seen, many from foreign lands, and even from benighted countries where the Gospel has but little penetrated, and all had the same story to tell, of the wonders of Jesus's love.

I find the close relationships between earth and heaven continue. The earthly friendships are, as yet, dearer, and more congenial than the new. I suppose it is because we know them better; but as eternity progresses, and we have com-

munion with these pure seraphic spirits, our love for them will doubtless become more intense.

"Yes!" said one of the bright ones. "The songs we used to love most on earth, we often sing here. I was with a company of friends in one of these gardens of delight, when I heard the familiar—

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love.
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

"Immediately all joined in the melody until the atmosphere seemed permeated, and our hearts overflowing with love to God, and to each other."

"Oh," said another "the ties that bound us on earth are not broken by death. Our loved ones have never, amid all the splendors of this celestial world, lost interest in us for a moment. There is joy in the presence of the angels over blissful events on earth, and from them as

they return from earth errands we may always inquire concerning the happiness, and advancement in purity and holiness of the friends who still remain there."

"I have often thought of earthly friends since I came," I said, "particularly of those less fortunate than I, whose burdens in some measure I helped to bear, the poor of earth some of them, but rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom.

"I have met so many here," I said, "far advanced in knowledge, purity and holiness, whom I knew on earth to be in the humble walks of life; living in obscurity and many of them in poverty."

"Jesus," said my friend, "does not select and appoint persons to positions here. He gave each the best chance possible on earth for spiritual growth; and their development in their former existences prepares them for the varied spheres they now occupy. The persons of whom you speak were hidden from the gaze of the

world, but not from the eye of the Omniscient. Though poor on earth, they were heirs to an incorruptible and fadeless inheritance."

There is no want here. "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more." "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters."

"Yes," I said, "Mrs. C—, whom I knew very well on earth, is here among the brightest of the shining ones. She toiled hard and incessantly to provide for the invalid husband and the children. No murmurings escaped her lips. Still smiling she would say, 'Jesus knows.' Our advancement here does not depend upon worldly wealth, or the accident of birth, which make distinction in the earthly life. What commends us to our Heavenly Father is the word of kindness, the act of love, the sacrifice made in

Christ's name. These are not forgotten, but meet with glorious recompense. 'The Father, who saw in secret, will reward them openly.' "

I had scarcely spoken when I saw a joyous company approaching. I recognized many of them. They were those to whom I had ministered on earth in their times of need; but how meager now seemed the aid I had given; how unworthy I felt of this greeting and reception. They were no longer pilgrims on earth, amid poverty, want and distress, but clothed upon with celestial raiment. None could appreciate the bliss into which they had entered more than they, for they had trodden a longer, rougher pathway home—a path beset with thorns, and yet some roses bloomed along their way. Now the toilsome journey was forever ended. They grasped my hands and smiled upon me, with exclamations of joy and thankfulness.

"Surely," I thought, "I am repaid a

thousand-fold for all the disappointments and sorrows of my former life, the 'light afflictions which are but a moment.' They did not seem light when they were mine to endure. Nor did they seem to last but for a moment. But what is time? A bubble on the wave of Eternity. With me now it is ended, and Eternity begun. And this eternity is an eternity of love."

When on earth I read: "Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus," I used to wish I could write my name in, and be numbered among those whom Jesus really loved, so that I need have no doubts about it. From the instant my eyes saw Jesus, a doubt became an impossibility. I have looked into His face. I have clasped His hand, and best of all I have heard Him say: *"I love you!"*

CHAPTER XII.

WHITER THAN SNOW.

Meeting "Auntie," a colored woman I had known on earth. Amazing change, white as the light. Instead of a turban, a crown of ineffable glory. Interesting call from "Auntie" on earth. Reading the Word to her in my home. Her responses. "Auntie's" triumphs of faith, and battles with Satan.

Many shall be purified, and made white.
(DANIEL 12 : 10.)

DE LIL' BRACK SHEEP.

De Massa ob de sheep-fol'
Dat guard de sheep-fol' bin
Look out in de gloomerin' meadows
Whar de long night rains begin,
An' he see de po' ole weddas,
An' de ewes so sleek an' white
An' dey all was dar but one lil' brack sheep
Dat was los' in de storm an' night.

Po' lil' brack sheep, done strayed away
Ter be los' in de win' an' rain.
An' de Shepherd he say "O hirelin',
Go fine dat sheep again."
But de hirelin' frown—"O Massa,
Dat sheep am brack an' bad."
But de Shepherd he smile like dat lil' brack sheep
Was de onliest lamb he had.

An' he say, "O hirelin,' hasten.
For de win' an' de rain am col';
An' dat lil' brack sheep am lonesome,
Out dar so far from de fol'."
An' de hirelin' frown—"O Massa
Dat sheep am ole an' gray."
But de Shepherd he smile, like dat lil' brack sheep
Was fair as de break ob day.

An' he say, "O hirelin,' hasten.
Lo, here am de ninety an' nine;
But dar, way off from de sheep-fol',
Is dat po' brack sheep ob mine."
An' de hirelin' frown—"O Massa
De res' ob de sheep am here,"
But de Shepherd he smile, like dat lil' brack sheep
He hol' it de mostest dear.

An' de Shepherd go out in de darkness,
Where de win' was col' an' bleak;
An' dat lil' brack sheep he find it,
And lay it agains' his cheek.
An' de hirelin' frown—"O Massa,
Don' bring dat sheep to me."
But de Shepherd he smile, an' he hol' it close,
An' dat lil' brack sheep—was me!

—*Anonymous.*

WHITER THAN SNOW.

Seated one beautiful morning with one of the best loved of the redeemed, in an arbor of beauty and fragrance which earthly language cannot describe (for the loveliness of these things hath not, and *cannot* enter into the heart of mortals), I saw coming toward us a company of celestial spirits. They were hymning a joyful song, and ecstatic joy was beaming from their faces.

"Who," asked my friend, "is that shining one, reaching her hands so eagerly towards you?"

I looked, and saw one whom I had always on earth, heard designated as "Auntie." She had been a colored woman remarkable no less for her ability as a cook, than for her fidelity to God and her church.

What an amazing change. She was now white as the light. Instead of a turban, she wore a crown of ineffable glory. Instead of the careworn, tired expression that I had been wont to note, her countenance was blissful and serene.

"Oh," she exclaimed, "I am so glad to see you. You helped me to get here. I have told the dear Lord all about it; but He knew it already. He gave you the words that you gave to me. I shall be thankful to all eternity that we ever met."

"And I also," I answered. "But I had nothing of my own. The earth was the Lord's and the gold and the silver belonged to Him, I was only His agent—the instrumentality through which He gave the blessings to you. I used to love to hear you sing. Do you sing now, auntie?"

"Oh yes, much more than I used to, but I do not sing about the troubles of the world; I sing now of the rest, and joy of

this eternal Kingdom. We shall meet again soon, and then I will sing for you."

The others, too, greeted and thanked me. As they passed on, my mind was repeating: "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands."

"Tell me," said my companion, "of your first meeting on earth of her whom you call auntie. I am sure it would be interesting."

The incident came to me as vividly as if it had only just occurred; and we seated ourselves under a tree, whose wide spreading branches were covered with leaves and flowers, redolent with odors, while I told her of a morning call made in my earthly home years ago.

"One summer morning," I said, "my

servant told me that a queer looking old colored woman wished to see me.

"Coming into her presence I recognized one in whom I had long been interested, though I had never spoken with her. I knew she was a regular attendant upon a church of wealthy, cultured white people. She could not help attracting attention, as she was the only colored person in the assembly.

" 'Auntie,' as she was familiarly called, never failed to be present on communion days. She seemed to have a deep sense of the supposed fitness of things. Nothing could induce her to present herself at the Lord's table until all others had been served. She was aged, and often somewhat fantastically dressed, and as she arose from her seat in the rear of the church, and slowly and solemnly made her way up the long aisle to kneel alone at the altar, she was an object of general interest.

"Some seemed to enjoy the scene, and watched this sable child of a King with moist eyes, while others, through fear of compromising the dignity of the church, heaved a sigh of relief when it was over, and Auntie was back in her seat again.

" 'Good morning, Auntie,' " I said, as I extended my hand. " 'I am glad to see you. I hope you are well.' "

" 'Not very well dis mornin' thankee. I'se got rheumatiz. 'Taint nothin' ye need ever wish ter hav, I kin tell yo'; but den I'se gittin' erlong purty ole now, nigh on ter eighty-seven year, but I jest had ter come dis mawnin' ef I did hev the rheumatiz, cause I'se in trouble. I thought mebbe yo'd help me. I knows yo' kin ef yo'll spend a leetle time wid me. Jest a leetle time, lady,' she said pleadingly.

" 'I'se nevah been so tossed about sence I took religion an' jined de church. I'se been troubled on evry side—troubled by

night, an' troubled by day, kase I don' know dat I'se zactly safe, an' when I donno dat I'se afeared, yo' see.'

"'Not safe, auntie, what do you mean?'

"'Why, I'll splain it to yo', ef I kin. Yo' see, I can't read de Bible myself, an' I hev ter git erlong wid jist what I kin pick up one way an' t'other, an' I'se sometimes afeared I'se done got off fom de true foundation. I was thinkin' erbout it dis mawnin' an' I felt awful bad, but I wants yo' ter read fo' me what Jesus says erbout it. I wants His own words. I cares nuffin' erbout what dis one ar dat one says, ef dey don't agree wid Jesus. I wants ter know what he says Hissef.'

"'When I was fust brung inter de church, dey used ter sing:

'How firm a foundation ye saints ob de Lawd,
Am laid fo' yo' faith in de excellent Word.

"'Now I wants ter hear de word 'Pears like ets jist what I needs.'

"'Well, auntie, the precious Word of God is a sure foundation. It will never fail us. I am glad you go to it for comfort when you are in trouble. Let us read the seventeenth chapter of St. John—Jesus's last prayer with His disciples. It is so beautiful and so full of comfort.'

"I commenced reading: 'These words spake Jesus, and lifted up His eyes to heaven.'

"Auntie leaned back in her chair, clasped her hands and looked upward as if she would imitate, even in this, the example of Christ. All the way along she kept responding, 'Help, Lawd, help, help de lady ter read dy word.'

"When I read, 'And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God,' she said: 'Yes, yes, I knows dee. I'se been 'quainted wid dee bressed Lawd, a long, long time. Nigh on ter sixty years. Lady, he's neber deceived me;

neber, neber, an' I knows he neber will. He's true. He's de true God.'

"Every verse I read seemed to increase auntie's faith. She continued to respond and as I finished the words, 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word, all her doubts and fears were gone. Her joy was ecstatic. She clasped her hands and the tears rolled down her cheeks as she exclaimed: 'Yes, yes; I'se safe, bressed Lawd, an' I knows et, 'kase I believe on dee.'

"I read on: 'And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them.'

" 'Yes, yes, Glory, glory. He hab giv' me de glory. Bressed be His name. Mah ole heart is full dis mawnin'. Dis pore old body feels young agin. De glory shines down so powerful dat it bleaches out all de brack an' makes mah heart whiter dan wool. Not dis colored wool, ha, ha; no, no,' pointing to her turban—

EVERY VERSE I READ SEEMED TO INCREASE AUNTIE'S FAITH!

'Ough dat am bleachin' too, now, I'se so neah de sunlight ob de city.'

" 'Lady, I feel strong in de Lawd dis mawnin', an' in de poweh ob His might. De ole debble may go back ter his den agin', where he 'longs; he can't move me no more nohow.

" 'Sometimes he comes fierce, 'cusin' me like. Scares me most to def, 'kase I tink mah soul's gwine ter be lost. I tink a heap ob mah soul. Why shouldn't I, when de bressed Lawd paid sich er price fer it? He didn't buy it for de ole enemy. No, no.

" 'Den agin he comes wid his blarney. Dat's de wust, de most decevin'-like, 'kase he makes you believe it—dat yo're good-enough, an' all right, an' den when yo' trust in yo' own strength down yo' goes, foh shuah. Sometimes he comes like er lion, er roarin' at me, es he did dis mawnin'. But when I kin heah de Word, I takes firm holt on Jesus an' de enemy

can't budge me et all. I feels jist like laughin' at him. De joy ob de Lawd comes in an' makes me feel good all through mah soul.

" 'Lady, I'se much obleeged ter yo' foh reading dat bressed Word. I'se a-most through wid doubtin's and fightins'; I shell cross de ribber Jerden soon. Den won't de meetin' be joyful on de banks ob deliberance. I shall meet all de ole friends dar who used ter tell me er bout Jesus, an' sing an' pray wid me on de ole plantation in de Souf. I shall meet my deah ole man an' de chillen. Some ob dem was growed up when dey died, an' some died so long ergo dat I disremember jist how de all looked, but we shell know each oder dar. Oh how my pore heart did ache, an' how lonely de journey peared ter me when de Lawd furst called 'em an' said, 'Come, chillen, come. Come away from de shadders an' de sorrows ob erth. Come ter de mansions I'se been

fixin' up foh yo' Honey, I'se so neah ter de end ob de road—to de crossin'—dat I kin e'en amost see de shoah.

"'Well I am 'gwine tek up no moah ob yo' time. Yo' done me so much good. Lady, I can't read, but I kin sing, and I love to. It brings me sich contentment, when I'se all alone with Jesus, ter sing ob de way. Et seems ter lighten up de paff. Le' me sing yo' one verse. Please excuse de voice. De voice am cracked, an' de body bent, but de soul am not a bit cracked; jist ez strong an' young ez ever, like de eagle, yo' know. I'se gwine ter hab er young body, too, when I reaches dat bright shoah. Now yo' must hab de song:—

"Sometimes de way am lonely an' de trials hard to bear,
Troubles ob de world! Troubles ob de world!
But dey makes de crown de brighter dat I'se gwine ter wear,
Troubles of de world! Troubles ob de world!"

"Yo' must bear de cross, if yo'd wear de crown,
Troubles ob de world! Troubles ob de world!
De Lawd will tell yo' when to lay it down,
Troubles ob de world! Troubles ob de world!"

"Good-bye, lady, de Lawd bress yo' foreber!"

CHAPTER XIII.

BUDS OF PARADISE.

Children in heaven especially beloved of Jesus. Different types of beauty in heaven as on earth. Nothing to be concealed. Children play in heaven. Martin Luther's letter to his little son describing the joys of paradise.

"Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

THE CHILD ETERNAL.

I heard their prayers and kissed their sleepy eyes,
And tucked them in all warm from feet to head,
To wake again with morning's glad sunrise—
Then came where he lay dead.
On cold, still mouth I laid my lips. Asleep
He lay, to wake the other side God's door.
But this one mine no more.

Those other children long to men have grown—
Strange hurried men, who give me passing thought,
Then go their ways. No longer now my own.
Without me they have wrought,
So when night comes, and seeking mother's knee,
Tired childish feet turn home at eventide,
I fold him close—the child that's left to me,
My little lad who died.
—Irene Fowler Brown in Harper's Magazine.

Dear little Edith, I find myself so often thinking about her, and anticipating the joy her presence will bring me, when she, too, enters upon this new life and we, as a family, are again united. The last time I saw her she was weeping over the loss of her mother. Poor little orphaned child! And yet while my love for her grows stronger continually, I feel no sorrow when I think of her. God's promise is "When thy father and mother forsake thee, then the Lord shall take thee up." She is in the keeping of my Heavenly Father, who loves her more strongly than I could ever do.

My love for my own little daughter, makes me think and talk of the children here. On earth I used to sing:

'I wonder, oh, I wonder, where the
little faces go,
That come and smile, and stay awhile,
and pass like flakes of snow.
The dear, wee baby faces that the
world has never known,
But mothers hide, so tender-eyed, deep
in their hearts alone.'

I know now that these tender lambs are in the care of the Good Shepherd. They are especially beloved of Jesus here, as they were upon earth. In His earthly life He said: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." So the "brightest and best of the Sons of the Morning"—those nearest the eternal throne, always beholding the face of the Father, are in constant communion and companionship with these blessed children.

I used to love the story of the little girl who said to her mother, "Shall I tell

you what Jesus says when I pray to Him and the angels are singing? He says, 'Hark, angels, I hear a little voice.' Then they stop and He hears me."

These buds of life, transplanted to this congenial clime, will unfold their pure leaves in this atmosphere of love. For growth is the law of intelligence and they will grow forever in wisdom, love, and loveliness. They are not all alike. There are many different types of beauty; and I often gaze and gaze in rapt wonder and astonishment as they come and go, and commune with me: or pass me singly or in groups.

As I had had on earth a peculiar love for children and my love was reciprocated, many little ones whom I knew and loved there have come here to greet me, with others of whom I had heard and read, and in whose history I had been greatly interested.

We do not need "introductions by

friendly angels'' as one famous writer once suggested, but the moment we see individuals we not only know who they are, but we know *them*. Their characteristics, their inmost souls, are open to view; there is nothing to be concealed. All is love and purity. We used to sing,

"We shall know each other better when the mists have cleared away."

The mists have vanished here. The material covering has been removed, and all the graces of the purified soul shine forth in undiminished luster."

The children are full of life and joy; supreme happiness beams from their faces, and sparkles in their eyes. They engage with ardor in work and play.

Watching them, I was reminded of Martin Luther's letter to his little son. I remember as I read it, I used to wonder if his ideas of heaven could be correct—if there could be anything in heaven bearing any similitude to the things he spoke

of. When a child I used to wish it might be so. I recalled the letter—

"Grace and peace in Christ, my dear little son. I see with pleasure that thou learnest well, and prayed diligently. Do so, my son, and continue. When I come home I will bring thee a pretty fairing.

"I know a pretty, merry garden wherein are many children. They have little golden coats, and they gather beautiful apples under the trees, and pears, cherries, plums and wheat-plums; they sing and jump and are merry. They have beautiful little horses, too, with gold bits and silver saddles. And I asked the man to whom the garden belongs, whose children they were. And he said: 'They are the children that love to pray and to learn, and are good.'

"Then said I: 'Dear man, I have a son too, his name is Johnny Luther. May he not also come into this garden and eat these beautiful apples and pears,

and ride these fine horses?' Then the man said: 'If he loves to pray and to learn, and is good, he shall come into this garden, and Lippus and Jost too; and when they all come together, they shall have fife and trumpets and all sorts of music, and they shall dance and shoot with little cross-bows.'

"And he showed me a fine meadow, there in the garden, made for dancing. There hung nothing but golden fifes, trumpets and cross-bows. But it was early, and the children had not yet eaten; therefore I could not wait the dance, and I said to the man, 'Ah, dear Sir, I will immediately go and write all this to my little son Johnny, and tell him to pray diligently, and to learn well, and to be good, so that he also may come to this garden. But he has an Aunt Lehne, he must bring her with him.' Then the man said: 'It shall be so; go, and write him so.'

"Therefore, my dear little son, Johnny, learn and pray away, and tell Lippus and Jost too, that they must learn and pray. And then you shall come to the garden together. Herewith I commend thee to Almighty God and greet Aunt Lehne, and give her a kiss for my sake.

"Thy dear father,
Martinus Luther.

"Anno 1530."

Luther, I reflected, knew that God in His wisdom would give play as well as work for the blessed little ones. The natural progress of growth does not cease when the tender bud is transplanted, but it grows on to glorious maturity, with not a joy of its youth-time lost.

CHAPTER XIV.

INFANT CHOIRS.

THE PLACE OF INFANTS IN HEAVEN. WHAT CHRIST MEANT BY "OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM." THE MYRIADS OF CHILDREN WHO HAVE NEVER KNOWN SIN OR SORROW FAR GREATER THAN THE NUMBERS OF THE ADULT REDEEMED. A VISION OF HEAVEN GIVEN TO A MINISTER OF GOD.

And they sang as it were a new song before the throne. (Rev. 14:3.)

And now, where we had often pictured her,
I saw her one of the beatified;
Eva, our blossom, ours forever now,
Unfolding in the atmosphere of love:
The star that set upon our earthly home
Had risen in glory, and in purer skies
Was shining; and the lamp we sorely missed,
Shed its soft radiance in a better home;
Our lamb was pasturing in heavenly meads;
Our dove had settled on the tree of life;
Another cord was ringing with delight,
Another spring of rapture was unsealed,
In Paradise; our treasure was with God;
The gift in the great Giver's strong right hand;
And none who looked on her could choose but say;
"Eva, sweet angel, God be bless'd for thee!

But, were it possible, more beauteous seem'd
The cherub child who clung about my knees—
A different beauty, hers. Sweet Constance, she
Had trodden a longer, rougher pathway home,
And not unset with thorns,—long for a babe,
Two winters and three summers was her life—
Rough only for a babe; but every step

AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

Ta'en by her little bleeding feet had left
Its tracery upon her spirit now
In tender lines of love, and peace, and praise.
Yet both were only infants; babes of light
In God's great household: heaven with all its joys
Had perfected, not changed, their infancy.
The younger, with the fearless gaze of one
Who never knew the shadow of a cloud,
Sparkling as sparkles a pure diamond.
The elder, with a child's deep confidence,
Which trusts you with illimitable trust,
And with one look summons and wins your heart.

And when I saw my little lambs unchanged,
And heard them fondly call me by my name,
"Then is the bond of parent and of child
Indissoluble," I exclaim'd, and drew
Them closer to my heart and wept for joy.

—*Henry Bickersteth.*

INFANT CHOIRS.

I remember while on earth I once heard one say, "It seem to me we will need infant choirs in heaven to make up full concert to the angelic symphony. Who will sing like unto them of the manger,—the swaddling-clothes, and of the Lord of life and glory drawing nourishment from the bosom of mortal mothers?

"True, these are themes of infinite interest, and the delight and wonder of angels. But O! they are too tender for the archangel's powerful trumpet, too tender for the thundering notes of the cherubim and seraphim. We must have infant choirs in heaven."

J. Montgomery sang—

"The harp of heaven
Had lacked its least, but not its meanest string,
Had children not been taught to play upon it

And sing from feelings all their own, what men
Nor angels can conceive."

"When Jesus said to us on earth," wrote John Newton, " 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven,' he not only intimated the necessity of our becoming like little children in simplicity, as a qualification, without which (as He expressly declares, in other places) we cannot enter into His kingdom, but informed us of a fact, that the number of infants, who are effectually redeemed by His blood, so greatly exceeds the aggregate of adult believers, that, comparatively speaking, His kingdom may be said to consist of little children."

As if He had said to His Disciples, "Do not hinder the mothers from bringing their children to Me. They are not too young to engage My time, and attention; they are not beneath My notice. I love

them. I have been much in their society before I came to you. There are multitudes of them in the world from whence I came."

Yes, heaven is peopled with innumerable myriads of celestial children. These opening flowers, all moist with the dew of morning, have been plucked by angel hands, to gladden with their beauty and fragrance, the choicest apartments of the palaces of angels and God.

These are sinless ones. They never knew envy, malice, or revenge; have never known earth's sorrows, and bitter griefs, and here they are forever safe. Eternal felicity is theirs. Their sweet voices mingle in the heavenly songs and swell the rapturous harmonies of Paradise.

Our earthly homes were always made happier for the presence of little children. We did not shrink from them because of their weakness, and infirmities,—the cares they imposed, and the anxieties they

awakened. Without them the home might have been filled with much that was refined and beautiful,—like a garden it may have had fine walks, and arbors, but if it had no flowers, it lacked the charm above all others.

Our Father's house in heaven is filled with children without weakness, infirmities, or wants, and they are clothed upon with all the beauty and loveliness of angels; and they, "like murmuring ripples which serve to swell the voice of many waters when they break upon the shore, now bear their part in heaven's immortal symphonies."

Yes, my friend has found out now that there are Infant Choirs in heaven. That the most enrapturing strains that fall upon the ears of immortals are from the voices of the blessed children.

When I first gazed upon them, their beauty and loveliness astonished, and almost overwhelmed me (if one could be

overwhelmed in heaven?), but my chief astonishment was caused by the exceeding greatness of their number,—"ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands."

As I began to question:—"Whence came they?" I thought at once of the thousands of infants that perished when the world was destroyed by flood—those that were consumed when Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed, those slain in the sack of thousands of cities in all the cruel wars of the past ages, those whose blood was spilt by Nebuzaradan, and by Herod in Bethlehem, and the adjacent villages, when a voice was heard—"lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning. Rachel weeping for her children and would not be comforted because they were not."

I thought of those that perished in the siege of Jerusalem,—and those whose

bodies have been offered up to heathen deities.

"Thousands upon thousands," J. M. Macdonald reminds us, "offered as victims upon pagan altars have been borne by angels to this glorious home,—those thrust into the flaming arms of Moloch,—offered up in the groves of the Druids—left to die in the streets of Pekin, or to perish in the river Ganges, are now forever safe, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands."

The white robes with which they are clothed are significant of their purity, the palms they bear denote their victory, and the eternal festival upon which they have entered.

The number of this heavenly host is not yet perfected. It is constantly increasing. The train of these blessed ones as they enter heaven is an endless festal line; they come and come without cessation. "Yes," I thought, "many of my

earthly friends, long ago, with aching hearts, laid their children in the grave. They have now rejoined them, and their bliss is complete."

One mother used to sing:—

"Sarah my last, my youngest love,
The joy of every other
Though thou art born in heaven above
I am thy only mother!
Nor will affection let me
Believe thou canst forget me."

They have never forgotten each other, and are now reunited forever.

While thus musing, some friends drew near. They entered into my thought, as our inmost souls are open to each other here. One of them said:

"O these reunions,—these receptions are transporting! I once knew a lovely and precious child who lost her mother at an age too early to fix the features of her dear parent in her remembrance. The child was as frail as beautiful, and her

friends saw that she must soon pass away. She would lie upon the lap of the friend who took a mother's care of her, and throwing her wasted arm around the neck of that dear friend would say:

"'Now tell me all about my dear mother.'

"And when the oft-told tale had been repeated she would say:

"'Take me into the parlor and let me look at her. I want to see my mother,' and she would lie for hours contentedly gazing on her portrait. At last the trying hour came; the dew of death was already on the flower, as its life-sun was going down.

"All at once a brightness as if from the upper world burst over the child's countenance, the eyelids flashed open, the lips parted, and she looked piercingly into space. 'Mother!' she cried, with a transport in her tone, and passed with a sweet smile into her mother's bosom."

"Yes," said the other friend, "the mother knew of the anxiety of her dear child to meet her, and was sent by our Lord to conduct her to their eternal home. Heaven and earth are so united that we recount the earthly incidents, one by one, over and over again. I will relate one that was told me by J. B. Finley, a minister of God, who came to the threshold of eternal life some years before his final departure from earth. He said:—

"'It was in the summer of 1842. Worn down with fatigue, I was completing the labors of a very toilsome year. I had scarcely finished my work, when I was most violently attacked with fever, and it was with great difficulty I reached home. The disease had taken so violent a hold on my system. that I sank rapidly under its power.

"'Everything that kind attention and medical skill could impart, was resorted

to, to arrest its ravages; but all was in vain, and my life was dispaired of.

" 'On the seventh night, in a state of entire sensibility to all around me, when the last ray of hope had departed, and my weeping family and friends were standing around me, waiting to see me breathe my last, it seemed to me that a heavenly visitant entered my room. It came to my side, and, in the softest, and most silvery tones, which fell like rich music on my ear, it said:—

" ' "I have come to conduct you to another state and place of existence."

" 'In an instant I seemed to rise, and, gently borne by my angel guide, I floated out on the ambient air. Soon earth was lost in the distance, and around us, on every side, were worlds of life and glory.

" 'On, on, away, away, from luminous worlds afar, we sped with the velocity of thought. At length we reached the gates of Paradise, and O, the transporting

scenes that fell upon my vision, as the emerald portals, wide and high, rolled back upon their golden hinges!

" 'Then in its fullest extent did I realize the invocation of the poet:—

'Burst, ye emerald gates, and bring
To my raptured vision
All the ecstatic joys that spring,
Round the bright Elysian.'

" 'Language, however, is inadequate to describe what then, with unveiled eyes, I saw. The vision is indelibly pictured on my heart. Before me, spread out in beauty, was a broad sheet of water, clear as crystal, without a single ripple on its surface, and in purity and clearness indescribable. On each side of this river rose up the most tall and beautiful trees, covered with all manner of fruit and flowers, the brilliant hues of which were reflected in the bosom of the placid river.

" 'While I stood gazing in joy and rapture at the scene, a convoy of angels was

seen floating in the pure ether of that world. They all had long wings, and, though they went with the greatest rapidity, their wings were folded close by their side. While I gazed, I asked my guide who they were, and what was their mission? To this he responded:

"'"They are angels despatched to the world, from whence you came, on an errand of mercy.'"

"I could hear strains of the most entrancing melody all around me, but no one was discoverable except my guide. At length I said:—

"'"Will it be possible for me to have sight of the just made perfect in glory?"'

"'Just then there came before us three persons; one had the appearance of a male, the other a female, and the third an infant. The appearance of the first two was somewhat similar to the angels I saw, except that they had crowns upon

JUST THEN THERE CAME BEFORE US THREE PERSONS.

their heads of purest yellow, and harps in their hands. Their robes, which were full and flowing, were of the purest white. Their countenances were lighted up with a heavenly radiance, and they smiled upon me with an ineffable sweetness.

" 'There was nothing with which the blessed babe, or child, could be compared. It seemed to be about three feet high. Its wings, which were long and most beautiful, were tinged with all the colors of the rainbow. Its dress seemed to be of the whitest silk, covered with the softest white down. The driven snow could not exceed it for whiteness or purity. Its face was all radiant with glory; its very smile now plays around my heart. I gazed and gazed with wonder upon this heavenly child.

" 'At length I said:—

" ' "If I have to return to earth, from whence I came, I should love to take this child with me, and show it to the be-

reaved mothers. I think when they see it, they will never shed another tear over their children when they die.' "

" 'So anxious was I to carry out the desire of my heart, that I made a grasp at the bright and beautiful one, desiring to clasp it in my arms; but it eluded my grasp, and plunged into the river of life. Soon it rose up from the waters, and as the drops fell from its expanding wings, they seemed like diamonds, so brightly did they sparkle.

" 'Directing its course to the other shore, it flew up to one of the topmost branches of one of life's fair trees. With a look of most seraphic sweetness it gazed upon me, and then commenced singing, in heaven's own strains:—"To Him that hath loved me, and washed me from my sins in His own blood, to Him be glory, both now and forever, Amen!"

" 'At that moment the power of the Eternal God came upon me, I sprang

from my bed, being healed as instantly as the lame man at the Beautiful gate of the temple, who went walking, and leaping, and praising God. Overwhelmed with the glory I saw and felt, I could not cease praising God, and the next Sabbath went to my church filled with His love and power.'"

He has long since joined the ransomed hosts of this heavenly world, and often speaks of the goodness of God in permitting him to have had the glimpse of glory with which he was then favored. As we approach the eternal city the veil that hangs between us and the spirit world becomes attenuated, and the sight of dying saints often pierces it. Many of them, standing on the verge of both worlds, have caught glimpses of the glory beyond, have seen familiar faces, and heard the songs of the redeemed.

CHAPTER XV.

THE FATHER'S TRIBUTE.

A FAMOUS MAN'S TRIBUTE TO A LITTLE GRAVE. THE MEETING WITH A HEAVENLY CHILD KNOWN ON EARTH, AND THE TOUCHING LETTER OF HER FATHER AFTER HER DEATH, RECOUNTING HIS REMARKABLE WAKING VISION OF THE LITTLE ONE WHICH BROUGHT PEACE AND TRIUMPH TO HIS HEART AND SAVED HIM FROM DARKNESS AND DOUBT.

"And a little child shall lead them."
(PSA. 2:6.)

TWO LITTLE FEET.

Two little feet went pattering by
Years ago.
They wandered off to the sunny sky
Years ago,
They crept not back to the love they left,
They climbed nevermore to the arms bereft
Years ago.

Again I shall hear those two little feet
Pattering by;
Their music a thousand times more sweet
In the sky;
I joy to think that the Father's care
Will hold them safe till I meet them there
By and By.

—*Anonymous.*

THE FATHER'S TRIBUTE.

More and more here in the Morning-Land it has come to me how strong a bond God has welded between earth and heaven by taking the little ones to Himself. The ache for the child that has gone, points the sore heart above.

Often and often as I watched the heavenly children I thought of the sweet and powerful tribute the eloquent Joseph Parker of London paid on earth to a little churchyard mound:

"Amid all the whirl and dizziness of life's tragedy," he said, "in which creation seems to be but one great cloud, I find myself suddenly brought to a sweet baby's grave. A gray old church, a gurgling stream, a far spreading thorn tree on a green hillock, and a grave on the

sunny Southerly side. That is it. Thither I hasten night and day, and in patting the soft grass I feel as if conveying some sense of love to the little sleeper far down. Do not reason with me about it; let the wild heart in sweet delirium of love, have all its own way.

"Baby was but two years old when, like a dew drop, he went up to the warm sun, yet he left my heart as I have seen ground left, out of which a storm had torn a great tree.

"We talk about the influence of great thinkers, great speakers and great writers, but what about the little infant's power? O child of my heart, no poet has been so poetical, no soldier so victorious, no benefactor so kind, as thy tiny unconscious self. I feel thy soft kiss on my withered lips just now, and would give all I have for one look of thy dreamy eyes, but I cannot have it.

"Yet God is love. Not dark doubt, not

staggering argument, not subtile sophism, but child-death, especially where there is but one, makes me wonder and makes me cry in pain. Baby! baby! I could begin the world again without a loaf or a friend if I had but thee; such a beginning with all its hardships, would be welcome misery. I do not wonder that the grass is green and soft that covers that little grave, and that the summer birds sing their tenderest notes as they sit on the branches of that old hawthorn tree.

"My God. Father of mine, in the blue heavens, is not this the heaviest cross that can crush the weakness of man? Yet that green grave, not three feet long, is to me a great estate, making me rich with wealth untold. I can pray there. There I meet the infant angels, there I see all the mothers whose spirits are above; and there my heart says strange things in strange words—Baby, I am coming, coming soon. Do you

know me? Do you see me? Do you look from sunny places down to this cold land of weariness? O baby! sweet, sweet baby! I will try for your sake to be a better man; I will be kind to other little babies, and tell them your name, and sometimes let them play with your toys; but, oh, baby! baby! my old heart throbs and breaks."

This is so tender and pathetic it seems like the wail of a young mother over the death of her first born, but it is the outburst of a cultured man, with keen intellect, but with a soul as large as it is tender. It is the natural yearning of the pure heart for reunion with the dear departed. God gave us this yearning—not to mock us in our sorrow, but to lift our thoughts to things above—to lead us heavenward.

Seeing so many of the glorified little ones, I was led to think one day of Jessie Z., who left her parents in her innocent

OH, BABY, BABY, MY OLD HEART THROBS AND BREAKS.

infancy; and whose body, beautiful as the form of a cherub, they laid in the valley to sleep under the daisies. I wondered how soon it would be my privilege to see her; I longed to be able to communicate with her parents, to tell of the glorious change which I was sure had come to their darling.

Scarcely had the longing to see her taken possession of my heart, when, as if the wish were father of the fact—I lifted my eyes to behold two beautiful children. They glided near me with their arms about each other.

One of them extended her hand, and as I clasped it in my own, and looked into her bright face, I saw that it was little Jessie, looking just as when she bade farewell to earth years ago, and went to live in heaven.

I had never forgotten her rare beauty and intelligence, her artless innocent prattle, her sweet winsome ways.

"Dear little Jessie!" I exclaimed. "I love you!"

"I love you, too," said Jessie. "We love all who come here, for none can enter whose hearts are not pure, and who do not bear the image of Jesus. But those who knew and loved us on earth are doubly dear to us here, we love them better now than we did when we were with them. And we love all those who loved our friends there."

Suddenly I heard a strain of music in the distance. I turned to catch its melody and when I looked again the dear ones had departed. But I felt that I should see them again soon.

As I thought of Jessie's words, the last scenes of that pure little life were mirrored before me, and I seemed to read again her father's letter to me concerning her.

"A little while ago, God in his infinite love and kind providence sent an angel of

beauty and of love,—a little child—to bless and cheer our home. She stayed with us only a short time, less than two years, but she came very close to our hearts, and I learned to love her so, that she seemed to be a part of my own life.

"She was interesting far beyond children of her age, not only to me because she was my child, but to all who knew her. Almost every day there was some new development in her little life, to attract and make all love her. She was the life and joy of our home, my last thought on leaving in the morning, and my first thought on returning in the evening.

"When she went away, I was left in the darkness. I had always believed in God, in heaven, and immortality. I had seen others die, and believed they went to heaven. I had looked upon death, to the innocent and the good, as only a change from this world to another far better, and as a change which though often a deep

sorrow to those left behind, was always a great blessing to those taken to their happy home above. But when this little life went out it was all dark to me. The sweet voice I had heard only a few hours before was silent. The bright eyes that had looked up at me, oh, so sweetly, were closed. The busy little hands and feet were still and cold. I looked at the beautiful form as it lay where the spirit left it, but in its white cold beauty, I could no longer see my angel of love.

"Then the question came to me with overwhelming force; *Where, oh where is my child?* She had slipped away so suddenly, that I had scarcely realized she was going, but then the awful fact, with its full crushing weight was upon me. All day long my whole soul was filled with the one thought; *Where, oh where is my child?* I knew that in her sweet innocence, she had gone to heaven, but that did not satisfy me. It was too in-

definite, and far away. Heaven seemed to be away off in the dim distant future, a place I had heard and read much about, a place to which I hoped to go when I should die, but about which I really knew very little. And I felt that I *must know* beyond all question, where my child was, or never again have a moment's rest.

"Feeling thus I went out and walked up and down in the darkness of night, and in the still greater darkness of my soul crying: Where, oh where is my child? And as I walked there in the darkness, finding no answer, another question came to me; Why was she taken away? Perhaps to lead me nearer to Jesus and to a better life. If so the means must fail, for I was never so much alone and in the darkness, and Jesus never seemed to be so far from me. And I said, "Oh, how can the loss of this dear child make me a better man? Her sweet presence could inspire good

thoughts, and make me tender and true, but her going away can only be a *great loss.*

"Then I thought, it may be that she was taken from me as a punishment for sin. I had neglected my duty toward God and toward my fellow men. I had sinned. I had lived a cold and almost useless life. I had not fulfilled the purpose for which God placed me in the world. I had not measured up to what he required of me, and now God was angry with me, and in His Divine wrath was sending merited punishment. I recognized the omnipotent power of God, and was willing to accept any punishment it might please him to send upon me. He could withdraw every joy and comfort, He could crush me to the earth. He could take away my own life. He could banish me from His presence forever; and I could only say, 'It is just.'

"But I felt it could not be for punish-

ment. God is love and punishment such as this, could never lead me nearer to Him; it could only harden and drive me from His presence, farther out into the darkness. Then I cried, why, oh my God, why then was she taken from me?'

"And in that dark, still night, I heard a voice saying, 'Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'

"Then as I looked up through the darkness I saw, O glorious vision that will ever remain bright in my memory through all time, and I think through all eternity! I saw my dear little Jessie in the arms of Jesus. I heard Him tell her that a long while ago, He had been born down in the world from which she came and how He had suffered and died, to secure for her the beautiful home she had come to enjoy with Him forever. Thus she heard the story of the cross for the first time from the lips of Jesus Himself.

And she seemed to comprehend it all. I saw her bright eyes sparkle, and as she looked up into the face of Jesus I heard her sweet voice saying: *I love you.*

"He placed a beautiful crown upon her fair brow. I saw that it contained many stars—and I heard Him say to her—'Even a little child can do the grandest work for Me, and these stars in this thy crown of glory, are to represent the souls your sweet little life brought nearer to Me.' And in the light reflected from one of those stars, I saw my own likeness.

"Then all questions were answered. Then I knew where she was, and why she had been taken. *Jessie* in *my* arms was very dear to me, but now in the arms of *Jesus* she is *tenfold* more precious. When she was with me, I would not have given her up for all the wealth of this world, no, not for ten such worlds. But now, if I could call her back, by a word, or a look, I would not do it. She is

IN THE ARMS OF JESUS.

brighter, lovelier, happier now, but *still my own dear child,* safe, safe at home. And there is no power that shall ever be able to take her from me. She is mine for all eternity. I thank God that He gave her to me, and I can as truly thank Him that He has taken her to Himself, in her sweet innocence and heavenly beauty to await my coming. I can understand now and say for myself, 'I am glad that the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.'

"Heaven is very near and real to me now. It is just as real as the things I see with my natural eyes. Jessie is not far away. She is always near me, always smiling and happy. It seems as if she had gone away for a few hours, but had come back bringing with her Jesus, and a company of very dear friends. Though I cannot see them, somehow they make me feel and know that they are

near me, and that heaven and earth are brought very close together.

"Some day Jesus will touch my eyes, and this mortal shall put on immortality. Then I shall see them." *P. W. Ziegler.*

CHAPTER XVI.

THE EVERLASTING ARMS.

The meeting with a college class-mate whom the death of a beloved wife left the prey of doubt. How the spectacle of a bird's first trial of flight taught him that "underneath are the everlasting arms." Heavenly song.

Sing unto him a new song. Play skilfully with a loud noise. (PSA. 33 : 3.)

GONE.

Our young and gentle friend whose smile
  Made brighter summer hours,
Amid the frosts of autumn time
  Hath left us with the flowers.

And half we deemed she needed not
  The changing of her sphere,
To give to Heaven a Shining One,
  Who walked an Angel here.

We miss her in the place of prayer,
  And by the hearth-fire's light;
We pause beside her door to hear
  Once more her sweet "Good Night!"

Alone unto our Father's will
  One thought hath reconciled;
That he, whose love exceedeth ours
  Hath taken home his child.

Fold her, oh Father! in thine arms,
  And let her henceforth be
A messenger of love between
  Our human hearts and Thee.

AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

And grant that she who, trembling, here
  Distrusted all her powers,
May welcome to her holier home
  The well beloved of ours.

—*Whittier.*

THE EVERLASTING ARMS.

One of my earlier and most delightful meetings in the new world was with B—, a friend of my youthful days and a classmate in college. He had been the leader of the college glee club, where his magnetic leadership, his knowledge of music and his powerful and melodious voice, had made him invaluable.

He had not changed, it seemed, one whit from the time when I had so often seen him standing in chapel, before the hundreds of students, his black hair shading his broad open brow, his cheeks ruddy with the bloom of health, and his dark lustrous eyes sparkling with animation as he led the choir. He had been during the four years of our college life an intimate friend and counsellor and in

his after life had been brought still nearer through his marriage to my cousin, Estelle, who came, while we were students, to teach music in the institution.

She was young, only twenty-two years of age, and remarkably beautiful. She was a blond, with wavy golden hair. She was a devoted Christian, and a charming singer.

The first day she appeared before the students, she was dressed in a simple white muslin gown and a pale pink rose with its long stem and cluster of leaves, lay on her bosom. She was the object of general interest, and, I thought of admiration also.

I was not mistaken in the admiration she aroused in one face especially—that of B—. It was her part to play the organ for Chapel services, and whenever she was appointed to sing a solo, she captured the students completely.

"Will you introduce me to your cou-

sin?" my friend asked me one morning. "She seems a lovely character, and she is a rare singer."

I found Estelle more than glad to know him, for she, also, had not been unobservant of the different persons she saw in College. She was pleased, not only with his brilliant, prepossessing appearance, his keen intellect, his strong leadership, but also with the purity of soul which seemed to shine out, and surround him like a halo of light.

"Cousin," she said to me one day, "John B— is not only one of Nature's noblemen, but grace has purified his heart. He is in harmony with God, and his life is consecrated to His service. That is the kind of friend I like best. What would you think if some day we should become more than friends?" she asked smiling, as a blush mantled her cheek.

"Nothing would please me better, my

dear cousin," I answered. "There is no one in college whom I more thoroughly admire."

As time rolled on it was plainly to be seen that they were deeply interested in each other. He graduated with high honors; taking a position as instructor in astronomy in one of our principal colleges. Estelle resigned her position as teacher of music, to the regret of those whom she taught, and soon they were married. It was a brilliant and beautiful wedding. All present predicted long years of happiness and usefulness for them.

Their home was an ideal one. It seemed there, as if Edenic purity and joy had been again restored to earth. But, alas for earthly bliss. The inhabitants of earth say: "Death loves a shining mark." But it was more true to say that Life—immortal life, loves a shining mark. Some mature early for their

heavenly home, and are fully prepared to enter upon celestial services; and these the Master takes because He hath need of them.

A few months after their marriage a fire broke out in the dwelling next to theirs. Estelle, alarmed for the safety of the inmates who were her personal friends, rushed with her husband to their rescue without sufficient clothing to protect them from the bitter cold of the winter's night. She took the parents and their children to her home where they were tenderly cared for; she and her husband trying to outdo each other in ministering to their comfort, and in striving to make amends for the unfortunate occurrence. But in the exposure of the night my cousin contracted a cold, which soon developed into consumption.

Day after day her husband saw her fading before his eyes. Despite every effort to relieve her, despite the remedies

of skillful physicians, and the tender loving care with which she was surrounded, the disease would have its way. The hollow cough, the hectic flush upon the beautiful cheek, told the tale of anguish to my disconsolate friend. Day and night he watched beside her, and could not be persuaded to leave her.

She never lost her cheerfulness but smiled upon him, and tried to encourage him. When he seemed more depressed than usual, she would smile more sweetly and quote:

"Cheer up, O soul, thou canst not die;
Why fearest thou the morrow?
Beyond the things of time and sense,
Beyond this world of sorrow,
All goodness waits to crown thee,
All love is ever round thee,
No pain can ever wound thee,
For *love* and *life* are one."

"Darling," she would say, "our love can never die. My love for you will live on eternally. I fall asleep and waken

with the same love burning in my soul for you; and the sleep of the grave cannot destroy this love." But she would add smiling, "the soul never sleeps; never loses consciousness, but lives on, and loves on, and on and on."

One day she said to him, "Raise me up, dearest."

He lifted her in his arms, and held her close to his bosom.

"I can breathe better now," she said.

Laying his cheek against her brow, he felt the cold dews of death upon it, and sobbed in anguish.

"O, my darling, how can I let you go?"

She smiled and repeated, "Cheer up, O soul, thou—" But she could go no farther. Then summoning all her remaining strength she looked into his face with celestial tenderness and said: "The eternal God is my refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms," and she

was gone. God had taken her to Himself.

My friend bore the crushing blow with heroism. He wrote me freely concerning the matter, for he knew I sympathized deeply with him. I, too, had sustained a great loss in my cousin whom I dearly loved, and I loved him also, so that the destroyer of his home brought a double desolation to my own heart.

He looked to me for comfort and consolation. We talked together, we prayed together. In trying to bind up his broken heart, my own heart was strengthened and made joyful in the Lord, for the same precious promises applied to both, and supplied all our need. But in the freshness and fullness of his grief he could not wholly grasp the promises.

"Cousin," he said one day, "I used to think God's promises were adamant under my feet; that heaven and earth might pass away before they should fail

me. Always though I could not understand all his dealings with me, I could say: 'Oh the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God: how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out.'

I could sing:—

"'I do not need to know
The wherefore, and the whys,
Of all the seeming ills
That in my pathway lies.
If God knows why, and wills that it should be,
That is enough for me.'"

"But now," he continued, "this is not so clear. O that I could feel assured again in my inmost soul, that God is love."

Duty drew us apart. We did not see one another on earth again, for his life was short. I knew that he had found peace, but what had been his experience, what had soothed his sorrow, and removed his fears, and made him victorious

in the "valley of the shadow" I had never heard. This was the thing I now, meeting him in this heavenly world, longed most to know. After a delightful interview with him, in which we conversed freely about earthly and heavenly things I said:

"B., in the last conversation we had together on earth, you told me that your faith seemed a little clouded. You wanted to feel assured of God's love for you. How did you get the victory?"

"After my beautiful home nest had been despoiled—broken up—" he replied, "I read an article in Nature's Studies, and Nature's works are always God's works that greatly encouraged and helped me.

"This author watched an eagle as she built her nest, and when the eggs were laid and hatched, he watched her as she fed the nestlings, and continued to watch until they were sufficiently developed to

try their wings, and he saw the mother bird thrust them from the nest, and teach them to fly, he said:

"Presently the mother eagle came swiftly up from the valley, and there was food in her talons. She came to the edge of the nest, hovered over it a moment, so as to give the hungry eaglet a sight and smell of food, then went slowly down the valley, taking the food with her, telling the little one in her own way to come and he should have it.

"He called after her loudly from the edge of the nest, and spread his wings a dozen times to follow; but the plunge was too awful; his heart failed him, and he settled back in the nest. In a little while she came back again, this time without food, and hovered over the nest, trying every way to induce the little one to leave it.

"She succeeded at last, when with a desperate effort he sprang upward and

flapped to the ledge above. Then after surveying the world gravely from his new place he flapped back to the nest, suddenly, as if discouraged. The mother eagle rose well above him. The little fellow then stood on the edge of the nest looking down at the plunge he dared not take. There was a sharp cry from behind, and the next instant the mother eagle had swooped, striking the nest at his feet, sending his support of twigs and himself with them out into the air together.

"He was afloat now, and flapping lustily for life. Over him, under him, beside him, hovered the mother on tireless wings, calling softly that she was there. But the awful fear of the depths was upon the little one. His flapping grew more wild, he fell faster, and soon he folded his wings as if expecting to be dashed to pieces among the lance tops of the spruces.

LIKE A FLASH THE MOTHER EAGLE SHOT UNDER HIM.

"Then like a flash the old mother eagle shot under him; his despairing feet touched her broad shoulders between her wings. He righted himself, rested for a moment, found his head, then she dropped like a shot from under him, leaving him to come down on his own wings. A handful of feathers torn out by his claws hovered slowly down after them. In an instant I lost them among the trees, but when I found them again with my glass the eaglet was in the top of the great pine, and the mother was feeding him.

"And then standing there alone in the great wilderness, it flashed upon me for the first time just what the wise old prophet meant when he wrote: 'As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him.'

"So I saw that my dear one had

plumed her wings for a higher flight; and what seemed a plunge into death and despair was only God stirring up the nest to teach us to mount nearer to Him: and then I saw as never before the true meaning of my darling's last words to me: *'Underneath are the everlasting arms.'* ''

It has taken some time for me to convey to you in words this experience and incident; but as I stood looking with peculiar interest into the face of my friend, it all flashed upon my mind in what seemed to be a "little moment" of time.

"You seem to be in a reverie," my friend said, "but O, I am unspeakably glad to find you here."

Without referring to the earthly side I replied, "Our meeting affords mutual pleasure. I am delighted to see you. But where is my cousin Estelle? I want to see her also?"

"You shall see and hear her in a moment or two. She is with the singers.

Listen!" and I heard, as he spoke, an innumerable company singing:

"Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen."

As the song ended I heard the echo reverberating through the Heavens:

"Amen! Amen! Amen!"

Instantly the spirit of praise filled my whole being. I had never been a skilled singer, on earth, but now all my soul was attuned to sweetest melodies. Lifting my voice, the most blissful and enrapturing strains arose and continued to resound among the eternal hills of God. My whole being seemed overwhelmed with a sense of the Divine Presence—the Divine love that had created and redeemed me, and my soul went out in a new song of rapturous praise to the Giver of all my blessings.

CHAPTER XVII.

LIGHT IN DARKNESS.

COMMUNION ONE WITH ANOTHER IN HEAVEN. A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE OF THE AUTHOR WHEN VERY ILL, IN WHICH SHE SAW HEAVEN AND SINCE WHICH ALL FEAR AND DREAD OF PHYSICAL DEATH HAVE VANISHED FOREVER. DEATH SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO AS A PLEASANT CHANGE.

"Wherefore should I fear?" (PSA. 49 : 5.)

THE OTHER WORLD.

It lies around us like a cloud,
A world we do not see;
Yet the sweet closing of an eye
May bring us there to be.

Its gentle breezes fan our cheek,
Amid our worldly cares
Its gentle voices whisper love,
And mingles with our prayers.

Sweet hearts around us throb and beat,
Sweet helping hands are stirred,
And palpitates the veil between
With breathings almost heard.

The silence—awful, sweet and calm
They have no power to break,
For mortal words are not for them
To utter or partake.

So thin, so soft, so sweet they glide,
So near to press they seem—
They seem to lull us to our rest,
And melt into our dream.

AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

And in the hush of rest they bring
  'Tis easy now to see
How lovely and how sweet a pass
  The hour of death may be.

To close the eye, and close the ear,
  Wrapped in a trance of bliss,
And gently dream in loving arms
  To swoon to that from this.

Scarce knowing if we wake or sleep,
  Scarce asking where we are,
To feel all evil sink away
  All sorrow and all care.

Sweet souls around us, watch us still,
  Press nearer to our side
Into our thoughts, into our prayers,
  With gentle helpings glide.

Let death between us be as naught,
  A dried and vanished stream;
Your joy be the reality,
  Our suffering life the dream.

—*Harriet Beecher Stowe.*

LIGHT IN DARKNESS.

We often sit in groups and talk together about the love of God as we felt it in our hearts on earth, and relate the earthly experiences that impress us most deeply, and helped us in drawing near to God. "We recount our toils only to heighten our ecstasy."

In one of these gatherings I had listened with delight to some of these recitals recalling "the tug and din of war" only that with a more bounding throb, and a richer song, we might feel and celebrate the wonders of redemption."

When it came my turn I said:

"Once during my early Christian life, God revealed Himself to me in a remarkable way, I had such an experience of joy in suffering, of strength in weakness,

of light in darkness, as has ever since filled my heart with gratitude to my Heavenly Father, not only for the bestowal of the grace which more than covered all my need, and filled me with the Divine fullness, but also for the afflictive dispensation which made the experience possible—the cloud of adversity which served as a back-ground, reflecting on its bosom the wondrous bow of peace.

"At the time of which I speak I had been taken suddenly ill, and for six weeks had been prostrated. Gradually I had grown weaker, my pain had increased until it was constant, and at times excruciating. At length my condition had become critical. My physician smiled as usual upon me, and spoke hopefully, but I could see that he and all my friends were anxious. Medical counsel and nurses were called and distant relations summoned.

"I understood all this, but I had not

been expecting death. The world was beautiful. Life was young and full of promise. My husband and I had been recently married, and one of the most precious gifts of heaven had been bestowed upon us—a happy and joyous child, whom we hoped to train for God and humanity.

"The question arose in my heart: 'Is this the end of life for me? Were those gifts bestowed to mock me? Were those bright hopes enkindled in my heart merely to go out in the darkness of the grave? And I wept bitter tears of disappointment.

"Then, too, the thought came, 'you have been so constantly occupied with the new experiences that have come into your life that you have thought too little upon eternal things, and perhaps are not well prepared for the change that may come.'

"This painful apprehension, added to

the disappointment of spirit already upon me, brought sorrow and despondency. I was too weak to converse with any one, or even to listen to conversation. I realized that I was where none but God could help me, and I lifted my heart in earnest prayer for grace to enable me to acquiesce in the Divine will.

"For two days I wrestled and prayed, not audibly, but in my heart of hearts: 'Help me to say, Thy will, O God be done.'

"At last I was enabled to say:

'Give joy or grief, give ease or pain,
Take life or friends away,
But let me find them all again
In that eternal day.'

"Then in an instant the peace of God came to my heart, and His power and glory overwhelmed and *submerged* me. It was as if a flash from the eternal throne suddenly entered, illuminating my soul, and filling the whole house with the

glory of God. The joy of my heart was *unspeakable.* God's presence, His infinite love, His tenderness, His compassion, His power to help were *real* to me, and I longed for physical power to proclaim it.

"Up to this time I had never enjoyed loud praises. I was more in sympathy with the sentiment of the poet who sings of:—

> 'The sacred awe that dares not move,
> And all the *silent* heaven of love.'

"But now the heart's adoration was not enough. I longed to make a joyful noise unto the Lord, and I thought if the voices of all creation should ascend with the united sounds of all the earth in one grand pean to the throne of God, it would be faint praise indeed.

"Next morning, the doctor said, as he entered my room: 'You look so bright. You are better,' but as he drew near and

examined the symptoms he shook his head. With difficulty I whisperd:

"'Doctor, God is here. The whole earth is filled with His glory! Let Mr. E. (he was the leader of the church choir) come and sing a song of praise.'

"The doctor, who was himself a Christian, said, 'I will sing for you.'

"Seating himself beside me, he began to sing, very softly, one of our sweet hymns. I said: 'O doctor, that will not do. Sing it loudly. Oh for a gust of praise to go to the ends of the earth.'

"He replied: 'You are too weak now, to listen to a song, but as soon as you are strong enough to endure it, your wish shall be gratified.'

"Again I whispered: 'If some one does not lift up his voice in praises, the stones will cry out.' It really seemed as if nothing but an outlet of this kind could keep my heart from bursting through overfullness of joy.

"Severe physical pain returned and I began to have what the nurse denominated 'sinking spells.' Whenever these attacks came, I seemed to my friends to be suffering extremely; but I was really in no more pain than if I had been already in heaven. I could not see persons in the room, but was perfectly conscious, could hear all that was said. I distinctly heard the doctor say to the nurse.

" 'I cannot detect the slightest pulsation. Can you?'

"This fact I shall never forget. When for a moment the earthly vision was clouded, the heavenly vision seemed open to me. It was as if the whole heavens were covered with circles of light, one within the other, and they seemed to extend beyond our farthest earthly vision, as if encircling the whole universe of God. As they approached the great light in the center, they were brighter; and

that light was Christ. It held my eyes. I had no power to move them—no desire to do so.

"When friends tearfully asked me to look at them, I thought:

" 'If you could know what I see, you would not ask me to look at *you.*' At the same time I seemed to hear rapturous strains of distant music, and to see forms of beauty gliding near me, but just out of reach, just behind the thinest veil. Heaven seemed as much a reality as earth; and no longer afar off, but very near. I was assured that to be absent from the body, was to be present with the Lord.

"Whenever breathing was restored, this vision of beauty vanished, and pain returned. This experience was repeated many times until I was filled with an unspeakable yearning to join the heavenly throng. For hours I had not been able to speak, even in a whisper, when sud-

denly again the power of God so supplimented my weakness that at midnight I began to sing:—

'On Jordan's stormy banks I stand
And cast a wistful eye,
To Canaan's fair and happy land,
Where my possessions lie.'

"Physicians and friends came to me trying to quiet me. My now sainted mother begged me with tears not to sing, as she feared the consequences. But remonstrances were all in vain; *I could not stop.* I sang the long hymn through in as strong and clear a voice, mother said, as she ever heard when I was in perfect health.

"Years passed away but the impressions I then received were never obliterated. How vividly it comes to mind as I listen to the song we used to sing on earth.

'O the blessing and the power that the Lord gave me then
I never shall forget. I never shall forget.

Even now 'tis stealing over me again and again,
It lingers with me yet.'

"How strange it seems now," said one of my companions, "that we ever had any fears of the coming change when we were assured in God's word that it is better to depart and be with Christ.

"Yes. I remember a dear friend, Lady Henry Somerset, said to me once on earth: 'It would be better I think for the world, and for all humanity at large, if all we had, and all we know, that brought us closer to the Divine,—if those moments when the gates ajar seem somehow to be so left open for awhile that the glory from beyond shines through them—we could tell to one another. Our lives are so bound together that all things which make the path easier, and the dark river brighter, and the beyond clearer, should be passed along, like bread at sacrament.'"

"True," another replied; "I think we

helped our friends much more by telling them these experiences than we could have done by spending the greater part of our time in merely enumerating Christian principles, even though they might be presented in the most truthful and eloquent manner. This experience," she continued, "must have proved very helpful to you, when you were restored to your earthly life and work."

"It certainly did," I replied, "not so much in remembrance of the ecstatic joy that filled me, as in the fact that God had so revealed Himself to my inner consciousness that the questions which had repeated themselves over and over to my inmost soul with regard to the personality of God, the immortality of the soul, the divinity of Christ,—all these were forever answered."

"Did it also entirely remove the fear of death?" asked one.

"Yes," I said, "I have never since had

the fear of death before my eyes. Our Heavenly Father never intended His children to be in bondage through fear of death. We call Death the 'King of Terrors,' but he is no longer King; instead of reigning over us, he has become our servant, the kindly messenger whom our Father sends to strike off our fetters, and open for us the portals of immortality."

"And yet mortals," said another, "cannot help shrinking from physical pain. God has so arranged it for their safety. Pain is a warning and it is our Father's will that we should resist it, and live for His service on earth as long as we can. Jesus, our divine Lord, when He saw the agony of the cross before Him, cried, 'If it be possible, let this cup pass from me.'"

"Yes," I answered, "physical pain is generally inseparable from dissolution, but it is rarely severe, and multitudes have passed through the change without

suffering, and have awakened in Heaven, as I did, wondering that they had never tasted death. Yet with the joys of the other life so near, and faith so absolute even the severest physical pang should lose it terror. Jesus said, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, if a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.' Benson paraphrases this saying thus:

"'If he steadily obey my word he shall never see spiritual and eternal death; and temporal death, the dissolution of his mortal nature, shall, with respect to him, hardly deserve the name of death; his soul, the real and true man, not dying at all, but passing into the paradise of God, and his body only falling asleep for a short season.'

"This," said I, "we have proved true. Our dear Lord always spoke of the change in a pleasant manner. 'The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.' 'Our friend Lazarus sleepeth.' And multi-

tudes of the redeemed here in heaven will testify that when earthly labor was ended, when the night came, God's weary children fell asleep on the breast of Infinite Love, as sweetly as the tired child closes its eyes in peaceful slumber on the bosom of its mother."

CHAPTER XVIII.

HEAVENLY ACTIVITIES.

The ceaseless activity of heaven. Its varied occupations and employments. Learning of the great plans of God. The quickened perceptions and the many new senses there unknown on earth. Intercourse with spirits of the great and famous of all ages and lands, as well as with the angels. There is no end to knowledge or to progress in heaven.

"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."
(JOHN 5:17.)

SOME DAY.

"A kindly nurse shall come some day
To us, with solemn mein, and say:—
'Tis time to go to bed and sleep.'
And we, mayhap, shall sigh or weep
To leave our playthings and our play,
And pray a longer while to stay.
But she, unheeding our alarms,
Shall fold us close within her arms,
Until upon her mother breast
We sink at last to sleep and rest,
And wake to read in angel eyes
Our welcome sweet to Paradise."

—*Zittella Cooke.*

HEAVENLY ACTIVITIES.

I have been continually surprised and delighted to find such ceaseless activity in this heavenly world. I had thought of it as a world of rest and peace, of joy and song, varied with blessed communion with those we love; but I had not imagined that we would continue to be employed in such varied occupations.

I said in conversation to one of my new friends: "You seem to be as busy here as you used to be on earth."

"Yes," he replied, "more so; for the employment is so delightful. There is nothing irksome, or wearisome in our work here. It is all so congenial, and we engage only in that which we most love. Then, too, we are so full of vigor and life that labor is a never-ceasing joy."

"I have noticed that you never seem to be tired," I remarked.

"No, we cannot know weariness here. Our heavenly Father never intended that any of His creatures should be idle. Adam was placed in the garden of Eden 'to dress and keep it.' One earthly writer said: 'Labor of the head, the heart or the hand is the only true nobility, the only true manhood.' Nothing adds more to our real happiness than these blessed employments. We are never hindered by lack of time; we have every help and every facility and can make our work as perfect as our powers will permit. Then, too, our perceptions are keener, our intellects stronger, so that we are able to grasp and take in the grand, and inspiring plans of God, or of nature, as we used to say on earth, in many ways hitherto unknown to us."

"You speak of quickened perceptions," I continued. "We saw on earth

many instances of remarkable development in early life—Pascal at twelve years of age and wholly without instruction, astonishing the world by his knowledge of Geometry—Magia Melo at five years of age, manipulating figures as rapidly as a calculating machine—Mozart executing a sonata on the piano, with four year old fingers, and composing an opera at the age of eight—Theresa Milanollo playing the violin at four years with such consummate skill as to astound masters. If all the powers of our heavenly bodies are to be thus enhanced what wonders may we not accomplish!"

"More than this," he said, "the inhabitants of earth not only have quickened perceptions in heaven but have greatly developed senses. There we had but five senses; here we have many more, and are enabled through them to take in the manifold resources of the Creator. To convey any idea of these new senses to

our earthly friends, would be as impossible as it was on earth to describe the act of seeing to the one born blind—who has no conception of sight—of light—or of color. Such a one you may tell never so eloquently of the light of the sun, or the beauty of the rainbow, or the flowers, but will he understand it? Or can you explain the harmony of sound to one who has always lived without hearing? If these remain without the knowledge, so must those of earth wait for the perfect revelation of the glories in reserve for them until the material body is exchanged for the spiritual, which God will endow with these new agencies.

"You will soon feel the budding of these new abilities. Just as on earth we used at rare moments to catch a veiled glimpse of that mysterious thing which some scientists used to call 'the sixth sense,' known as second-sight, so here we feel, one by one, the blossoming within us

of some sweet new sense of whose very existence in us we had never even guessed. There is, so far, as we can learn, no end to the number of these avenues which await us, and each will open wide and undreamed vistas for our eternal view.

"I remember," I said, "a sentence of Dean Alford's, Man, redeemed and glorified will not be a mere spirit in the vast realms of space, but a glorious body moving in a glorious world."

"So," said my friend, "we are ever learning and advancing, and shall always be going on to higher achievements. We enter heaven with the same desires for knowledge that we had on earth. Bishop Hall was once lamenting that he knew so little of astronomy; and he consoled himself by saying: 'Never mind; I am going to heaven and I shall take the stars in my course.' And he was right."

"If our earthly friends only knew," I

exclaimed, "they would never think any life a failure because it ceased on earth in the midst of its pursuit of knowledge. The philosopher, the scientist, the artist, all will carry on here the researches they had only begun, and without the drag of weariness or of poverty. The visions that inspire the earthly poet and painter will here be a million-fold more beauteous and brilliant. For they will be permeated with the breath of the immortal Spirit and will thrill and glow with the joy eternal."

"We are aided too," he continued, "by our intercourse with congenial spirits who are interested in our favorite employment, and who are more than ready to answer our questions, to communicate the knowledge they have themselves acquired. We have communion also with the first born Sons of Light—the innumerable company of angels, whose shining cohorts watched the creation of the

world. They will give us all the knowledge our progress can receive."

"When on earth," I said, "I often used to wonder why if these things were true, God had not given us some intimation of the enlarged capacities, the quickened sensibilities, of the heavenly inhabitants. But I remembered that He gave us no intimation of the resources of earth, but left it to us to discover and appropriate them.

"Our early fathers knew nothing of the power of electricity or of steam, to lighten labor, to drive machinery, or to furnish heat and light. They were content to use the tallow candles and considered them a great improvement over the vessels of oil used by their ancestors. They knew nothing of radium, or of many other elements that are now being utilized for the benefit and comfort of the world. And without doubt the earth has

still abundant resources that its inhabitants have not yet discovered.

"I used to hear my father say: 'I would like to look in upon this world a thousand years hence, and see how it is getting along. Wonderful improvements will have been made by that time. We have but entered the threshold of research and practical application. I believe,' he would say, 'that we have only just begun to learn the great lessons God has prepared for us. Finding out these great purposes of God is so delightful, and thereby we so greatly increase our own enjoyment and enlarge our capacity for happiness, that I think I could spend a thousand years here very enjoyably if it were my Heavenly Father's will.' "

" 'But father,' I would say, 'when the thousand years were over would you not wish to remain another thousand?'

" 'Yes, my child. Nothing but Eternal life would satisfy me. But,' he added,

'He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life in the present tense not shall have. I *have* eternal life.' "

"And yet," my friend replied, "no matter how great advancement the earth may make—no matter how far and fast she may increase in knowledge, the most marvelous achievements of her future are eclipsed by the ever increasing glories and revelations of this wonderland.

"Our increasing knowledge will only reveal to us the boundlessness of the universe and the infiniteness of the Divine, and we shall mount from height to height, from summit to summit, ever approximating but never reaching the absolutely perfect and only wise God."

"Even on earth," I said, "I thought I could understand the intense longing of those who had gone before to impart to their earthly friends a clearer and more definite knowledge of the unspeakable glories. I feel that longing now. And

yet I know it is impossible to make them understand. Their conditions are not analogous to our spiritual state. We have no means by which we can impart the knowledge to them. The real heaven is so far beyond their loftiest thoughts, so far surpasses in glory all earthly conceptions that Jesus Himself, in earthly language could not reveal it to His disciples.

We used to gaze, as Hugh Johnson said, on the glimpses which the Revelation gave us, until the light grew too bright for mortal eyes, and the soul was overpowered. And as we ask ourselves the questions—"What mean these symbols—the walls of jasper, gates of pearl, streets of gold, fountains of crystal, white robes and palms, crowns and thrones? They are pictures glowing and magnificent but the inheritance itself is inconceivably better than the picture."

For some time after my friend had left me, I sat in revery. "How different the

real heaven," I thought, "from the heaven so many on earth imagine it. As I once heard a minister remark: 'Some people have the idea that the highest bliss of heaven consists in sitting on a cloud and singing psalms.' And when I was a child myself I used to wonder whether if I did get to heaven, I would not tire of dressing always in white, wearing a crown wherever I went and singing nothing but hallelujahs.'

My thought flew to Harvey—"poor Harvey," we used to say on earth, thinking of him as mysteriously "cut down" by death in the midst of his career. I know now that he is here with us in this new world and that the tragedy we sorrowed for had meant for him only a glorious graduation into an infinite usefulness. I thought of his half-jocular speculations as to the future life. When we sang of spending an eternity

'Where congregations ne'er break up
And Sabbaths never end.'

he used to say he had no doubt heaven was a holy place, but he was afraid he would have to be a good deal better and holier before he could enjoy a never ending congregation, for even earthly congregations often tired him.

I, too, I mused, had been as far from the real conception. To me, heaven was merely a place of rest. If we were to have any employment there, I imagined it would consist only in worshiping, adoring and praising the bounteous Giver of all our blessings. Instead, it is a world of blessed and increasing activity—of pure and congenial employment.

If those on earth who sorrow for the passing of loved ones could but look through the veil that hides this high reality—could they see them engaged in the glorious activities of this eternal world, how quickly questionings would cease and murmurings and tears merge into rejoicing.

CHAPTER XIX.

SUPERIOR JOYS.

Heavenly blessedness consists not only in what it has not, but in what it has. Hearing can attune itself to hear any sound created. Each inhabitant is perfect in grace and beauty yet with an individuality of his own. Vision is perfect, needing neither telescope nor microscope. Prismatic colors and enrapturing natural scenery of heaven. Flowers in the morning-land. All languages as one, understood and spoken by all.

"Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side." (Psa. 71:21.)

A VOICE FROM HEAVEN.

I shine in the light of God,
His likeness stamps my brow;
Though the shadows of death my feet have trod,
And I reign in glory now.
No breaking heart is here,
No keen and thrilling pain;
No wasted cheek, where the frequent tear
Hath rolled and left its stain.

I have found the joy of heaven,
I am one of the saintly band;
To my head a crown of gold is given,
And a harp is in my hand.
I have learned the song they sing,
Whom Jesus hath set free:
And the glorious vaults of heaven ring
With my new born melody.

No sin, no grief, no pain,
Safe in my happy home,
My fears are fled, my doubts all plain,
My hour of triumph come.
O, friends of mortal years,
The trusted and the true,
Ye are walking still in the vale of tears,
But I wait to welcome you.

AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

Do I forget? O, no,
For memory's golden chain
Shall bind my heart to the hearts below
'Till they meet and touch again.
Each link is strong and bright,
And Love's electric chain
Darts swiftly like a beam of light,
To the world from whence I came.

Do you mourn when another star
Shines out from the glittering sky?
Do you weep when the raging voice of war
And the storms of conflict die?
Then why should your tears run down,
And your heart be sorely riven,
For another gem in the Saviour's crown,
And another soul in heaven?

—*Anonymous.*

SUPERIOR JOYS.

What we of this Morning-Land long most to communicate to those we have left behind, after the certainty of the great love of God which enfolds us, is the manifold joy of heaven. Enjoyment is all around us, it accompanies the exercise of every function.

On earth, when we spoke of heaven, we were apt to use negatives. No sickness —no pain—no death—no sorrow—no parting—no disappointments—no weariness—no trouble—no poverty—no sin—no night—no darkness—no heat—no cold —and "nothing that maketh a lie." This is all true. Nothing that can mar in the slightest degree our perfect happiness, will ever enter here. But the blessedness of heaven consists not only in

the absence of these things—not alone in what it has not, but in what it *has*.

Here are the melodious choirs of angels; here the sweet fellowship and company of the heavenly inhabitants; here the joyful pomp of all those triumphant souls, who fully realize that they have laid down forever the trials and crosses of earth, and entered upon joys that are immortal.

No wonder that Augustine exclaimed: "O heavenly Jerusalem! our common mother, the holy city of God, thou beautiful spouse of Christ, my soul loves thee exceedingly, and all my faculties are ravished with thy charms. O what graces, what glory, what noble state appear in every part of thee! Most exquisite is thy form, and thou alone art beauty without blemish. . . .

"O how happy will my soul perceive itself, when it shall be permitted to see thy glory, thy beauty; to view the gates, the

walls, the streets, the stately buildings, the splendor of thy inhabitants, and the triumphant pomp of thy King, enthroned in the midst of thee! for thy walls are of precious stones, and thy gates of pearl, and thy streets of pure gold, continually resounding with loud Hallelujahs.

"No succession of night and day; no intervals of darkness; no difference of seasons in their several courses; nor is the light derived from artificial helps, or natural luminaries, the same as ours; no lamps, or candles; no shining of the moon or stars, God, the God of Light, even the sun of Righteousness shines in thee, and the white immaculate Lamb, He it is that enlightens thee with the full luster of His majesty and beauty."

"And is this heaven? and am I here?
How short the road! how swift the flight!
I am all life, all eye, all ear;
Jesus is here, my soul's delight."

I do not speak now of our great blessedness in having the King of Glory always with us, or in the delight of doing labor for Him—and heaven is filled with such opportunities—but I speak now of the lesser delights which come to us through the senses. Besides the new senses which we learn to use our five earthly senses are so vivified and intense that they give us a hundredfold more delight than we had thought possible.

Of the beauties of sound there is no end. I have spoken of the rare music that even heavenly thought gives birth to. It is as varied as are our reflections, and in many more keys than we could distinguish with mortal ear. The great diapason of eternity knows many notes above and below the scale of earthly music. These we can hear to their last infinite attenuation.

Here we can attune our sense of hearing to catch these further tones. All

that has been said or sung by human or angelic lips we can rehear when we choose, whether it be Miriam's song of triumph by the Sea, or the hymn of the hosts of light when the morning stars sang together at the building of the world.

No language of earth can convey any adequate idea of the beauty and grace of the heavenly inhabitants. As we were wont to observe on earth, God delights in variety. He never makes two persons alike. In all the countless millions of God's creation, no two faces are ever just the same in appearance. Each has his own individuality, and is known from all others. The resources of the Creator are infinite. I remember it was said by botanists that no two leaves upon a tree—no two blades of grass—no two blossoms of any plant, are exactly alike. Even the grains of sand upon the sea shore,

would, if examined under the miscroscope, show differences.

This is true also in Heaven. We do not need microscopes to aid us in our discoveries. Our vision here takes in all objects before us, both great and small. For our sense of sight, innumerable views await us, more splendid than those of earth. There is no effect of towering cliff, of sunny meadow or of smiling sea, which has delighted our eyes on earth, that here has not its counterpart more glorious. On all a million new prismatic colors glow and gleam. The hues of sky, of foliage and of bloom are immeasurably more lucent than on earth.

I remember my little Edith once asking, "Mother, do you think there will be flowers in heaven?" adding, "I would not like to live where there are no flowers." I am glad I was able to tell her I believed there were. Ruskin was near to eternal truth when he wrote:

"That sentence of Genesis, 'I have given thee every green herb for meat, has a profound, symbolical, as well as literal meaning. It is not merely the nourishment of the body, but the food of the soul that is intended. Under the dark quietness of the undisturbed pines, there spring up, year by year, such company of joyful flowers as I know not the like of among all the blessings of the earth, and all come forth in clusters crowded for very love." And Mahomet, mistaken as he was, yet spoke in wisdom when he wrote: "He that has two cakes of bread, let him sell one of them for flowers of the Narcissus blossom, which is the food of the soul."

A traveler lost in an African desert, after wandering for days without food, drink or shelter, weak and disheartened, thought himself forsaken by God and man. He lay down in despair to let the

desert become his grave, when he saw a little flower clinging to a rock.

The sight cheered him. He thought, "Surely God thinks of this place or why the blossom? He placed the blossom here to greet me, to speak to me of His love. If so He thinks of me. If He thinks of me and loves me, He will help me in this my time of trouble. I will trust in Him and try once more." He rose, struggled on his way out of the desert and was saved.

Our Heavenly Father has given flowers to earth for the joy and comfort of His children, and He has placed them in this our heavenly home for the same purpose. Here they grow in much greater variety, luxuriousness and beauty, and shed odors sweeter than mortals dream. Here in these blessed gardens the grass is softer than velvet, fruits more fragrant and glowing than in any earthly paradise are on every hand, and singing

birds of surpassing plumage come at call, unafraid since harm and its sister fear here are unknown.

Here we feel, as we did on earth, the balmy air upon our faces, the soft touch of grass and bough, and most of all, the leap of life within us, full and abounding with the vigor and the health of heaven.

Our mental powers are wondrously acute. Not only is our memory of the past flawless but we have perfect power to convey each thought and impression to others. I had talked with many here before I was able to comprehend this fact and all it implied. It came to me suddenly that these conversations had been in various tongues—some in languages that I had had no acquaintance with on earth.

Each kindred and people and nationality had conversed in its familiar speech, but each had interpreted itself perfectly as it fell on my ear. I had often mar-

veled at that strange scene on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit fell upon the worshipers—when they "began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance." I understood at last the amazement and joy of the disciples, as they cried:

"How hear we every man in our own tongue wherein we were born? Parthians and Medes and Elamites and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, Prygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God."

Vainly do I attempt to describe, in earthly language, the grandeur and sublimity of this eternal life,—the unspeakable resources of enjoyment,—the satisfaction of the soul as it enters the consu-

mation of its bliss. It is like the peace of the child in its mother's bosom; the rest of the mariner when the storms are over; the joy of the conqueror crowned by his sovereign; the glory of the saint in the smile of the Lord!

CHAPTER XX.

THERE IS NO DEATH.

The inhabitants of heaven a great united family. Prehistoric man and his place in creation. There is no such thing as "seeing death." The wonderful dying experience of Bishop Haven and two strange incidents, one from the life of the great Dr. Priestly. What great philosophers of old thought about death. A touching admission of Ingersoll. Christ shares His glory with His redeemed ones.

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? (1 Cor. 15 : 55.)

THERE IS NO DEATH.

There is no death. The stars go down
  To rise upon some other shore,
And bright in heaven's jeweled crown
  They shine forevermore.

There is no death; an angel form
  Walks o'er the earth with silent tread;
He bears our best loved things away,
  And then we call them dead.

He leaves our hearts all desolate,
  He plucks our fairest, sweetest flowers;
Transplanted into bliss, they now
  Adorn immortal bowers.

Born into that undying life,
  They leave us but to come again;
With joy we welcome them the same,
  Except in sin and pain.

And ever near us, though unseen,
  The dear immortal spirits tread
For all the boundless universe
  Is life; there are no dead.

—James L. McCreery.

THERE IS NO DEATH.

"The inhabitants of heaven gathered from every age, out of every kingdom, and nation and tongue, are not merely one great kingdom, but one great united, loving family." So wrote Macdonald. This is gloriously true; they dwell in perfect harmony and love; and unite in the same lofty and delightful services.

When on earth, we often talked of primitive man, and tried by delving into its depths, and bringing up ancient relics, to understand the different modes of life, as it existed for them. We tried eagerly to decipher the hierogliphics, and to gather all the knowledge we could possibly gain.

We talked of "prehistoric men," and supposed they must have been far be-

neath the men of our day in intelligence. But we were mistaken in many of our conclusions. In heaven, we find many of them from the first period of creation, down to the present generation. We converse with them freely. They take pleasure in answering our questions, and in giving us any information we may desire.

We find that they were, at the first, created, not mere animals, capable of development, but men and women in the likeness and image of God, with intellectual ability far exceeding any of the highest orders of animals. Their intellects were just as keen, their perceptions as clear, and vivid, as ours.

We have had the benefit of all the knowledge and acquirements of past ages. They began the ascent at the first round of the ladder, we stepped upon it higher up; but perhaps we have made no greater progress, according to our environments and advantages than they did.

They have grown in knowledge in heaven, much faster than we could do on earth, and are now among the brightest of the shining hosts.

It is intensely interesting to talk over the earthly life with them, and we find that their life was as happy as ours. They enjoyed their primitive ways, as well as we did our more advanced and scientific ways, as we called them.

Here we have entered on a state of higher knowledge and of endless progress. As we enter into this world of light we become as little children. It is all new to us, and there is so much we desire to learn. The greatest acquirements of earth fade into nothingness, seeming as the wisdom of babes in comparison with the knowledge obtained here. Yet we all love to recur to earthly scenes and experiences. We remember it was on earth we began the existence that now binds us to eternity. That existence has never

for a moment ceased. It is changed in conditions only.

Some years ago a number of Celtic tombs were discovered near Bergerac in France. Under the head of each skeleton, buried, two thousand years ago, the Druid priests had placed a block, and under each of these blocks, in a little circular cavity, covered with cement, a small quantity of seeds. These seeds, after lying dormant for two thousand years, were collected and sown with particular care. They rapidly germinated, and the heliotrope, trefoil, and the blue-bell were seen springing in the resurrection of life, after twenty centuries of burial; so that one might see with his own eyes, "these marvelous plants blossoming in beauty, under the light of our own spring-time, after their germs had slept two thousand years under the heads of the dead, and in the dust of the tombs."

The dear departed ones of earth are

not *dead,* but are blooming with us, in celestial beauty and glory. Like the vine, the soul sends out its tendrils to grasp that which is higher, and stronger than itself. When it is firmly entwined about the eternal, it is borne above the desolations of death. It stands erect when every earthly prop is cut from beneath it.

All earthly losses combined cannot affect the immortal. They may make the pathway rougher, but they hasten the consummation and make it sweeter when it comes. Earthly things were transient, heavenly things are permanent. In this, our immortal home, the former things have passed away. The desolation that came to us has given place to life and beauty; the loneliness to blessed and eternal companionship.

As I ceased my reverie and was exulting in these blissful thoughts, my earthly husband stood by me with two other companions.

"You are right, dearest," he said, "in your thought concerning death. Jesus said, 'If a man keep my saying, he shall *never see death.*' We had repeated illustrations of this truth among our own earthly friends.

"We remember with pleasure, even here in this immortal state, the closing hours of our beloved Bishop Gilbert Haven. Death came to him in the midst of his honors and usefulness—in the glory of his manhood, when his eye had not dimmed nor his natural strength abated.

"There was in him an exuberance of feeling; a hopefulness that made life desirable; but his faith did not waver; God's presence filled him with joy. He had preached the supports of the Gospel to others: they stood the test of his dying hours. To one of his friends he said—

"I have been preaching these long

years, and I want you to say to the brethren now for me, I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day. Then he shouted with all his strength, "Victory, victory! victory through the blood of the Lamb!" '

"To another he said, 'He is a whole Christ; a full Saviour, glory to God for such a salvation!' To a third he said, 'Good-night, doctor; when we meet again it will be Good-morning! The whole day on which he died was filled with exclamations of 'Glory! glory!! glory!!!' An hour before he died he fell asleep; then awaking he said, 'There is no river here; it is all beautiful.' Thus the happy spirit passed into the heavens.

"I remember it well," said one of the group, "and also the experience of my own dear Pastor Dr. J. F. Chaplain. Some time before he died his countenance

was illumined as with a divine beauty. His smiles were heavenly. Lifting his hands in astonishment at what he saw, he would exclaim in holy triumph, 'O wonderful! wonderful! The room is full of angels. Don't you see them? The angels are all around. They are in my room; they are round my bed. I see Jesus! I have royal escorts. The ineffable appears in sight.

> For me my elder brethren stay,
> And angels beckon me away,
> And Jesus bids me come.

"'Weigh me down or I will leave you,' he said, lifting himself up as though constrained to join the holy ones whom he beheld. A few hours later his earthly life ceased, he stepped into the waiting chariot and was gone with the angels.

"Yes, the grace of God is abundant in the support not only of my pastor, and of other mighty champions of the cross, but it is equally adapted, and often as

signally, to the pure but timid disciple. Many such came under my own observation in my earthly home."

The second one spoke: "I remember an earthly incident which made a deep impression upon my mind. My husband and I had an intimate friend who lived near us. He had two children who were the joy and pride of his heart. All his earthly interests seemed to center in them. The elder—a daughter, married a professor in one of our colleges; the younger, a son, attended school in the same institution.

"One evening, the father sitting in his library began thinking of his son. After a time he tried to turn his thoughts into another channel, and to give his attention to a lecture which lay unfinished on his desk. He was unable to do so. His son was continually before him; so he thought I will write a letter to him now while my thoughts are so deeply fixed upon him.

"He wrote the letter, speaking of his great love for him; told how he missed him, and of the yearnings of his heart for companionship with him, but said he was glad to hear of the progress he was making in his studies, and that he looked forward with joy to the time when he should graduate and enter upon the prosperous and useful career that he felt assured awaited him.

"He folded the letter, put it in an envelope, directed it, and laid it upon his desk, saying to himself, 'I fear it is too late to mail it to-night. I have written a long letter. It has taken me some time. I will see what time it is.' He opened his watch and discovered that it was half-past twelve o'clock.

"Looking up he saw to his astonishment and delight, his son standing by his side smiling upon him. He sprang to his feet, saying: 'O, Will! I did not know you had come home. I have just finished

OH, WILL! I DID NOT KNOW YOU HAD COME

writing a long letter to you.' But as he looked again his son had disappeared. He then thought the son had gone to his mother, but as he saw she was asleep, he called out, 'Mother! Mother! Will is here!' But when he failed to find him anywhere in the house, and learned that no person beside himself had seen him, his joy turned into sorrow; and he said: 'My dear son has passed away from earth. I am sure he is gone, and I can commune with him no more.'

"In the morning when the door bell rang, the father said: 'That is the messenger bringing the news of the death of dear Will,' and so it proved. He had died suddenly the night before at half-past twelve o'clock. This incident came to me directly from the lips of the father."

"These experiences," said one of the others, "were very interesting to persons on earth, for they seemed to prove to them

what we all now know to be an absolute fact—that the soul retains its conscious existence after the death of the body.

"Dr. Priestly, whose great mind, with its intellectual grasp, first discovered oxygen, told me of a similar experience that came under his observation in the family of the Marquis of Lansdowne.

"While Dr. Priestly occupied the post of Librarian to Lord Shelburne one day Mr. Petty, a precocious and gifted youth sent for Dr. Priestly. When the doctor entered, Mr. Petty told him he had passed a very restless night, and had been much disturbed by uncomfortable dreams, which he wished to relate to Dr. Priestly, hoping that by so doing the painful impression would pass away. He then said he dreamed he had been very unwell, when suddenly the whole house was in preparation for a journey, he was too ill to sit up, but was carried lying down into the carriage; his surprise was extreme in

seeing carriage after carriage in an almost interminable procession.

"He was alone, and could not speak; he could only gaze in astonishment. The procession at last wound slowly off. After pursuing the road for many hours towards London, it at last appeared to stop at the doors of a church. It was the church at High Wycombe, which is the burial place of the Shelburne family. It seemed in Mr. Petty's dream that he entered, or rather was carried into, the church; he looked back; he saw the procession which followed him was in black, and that the carriage from which he had been taken bore the semblance of a hearse.

"Dr. Priestly told him that his dream was the result of a feverish cold, and that the impression would soon pass off. Nevertheless he thought it best to send for the family physician. The next day Mr. Petty was much better; on the third

day he was completely convalescent, so that the doctor permitted him to leave his room; but as it was in January, and illness was prevalent, he desired him on no account to leave the house, and with that precaution took his leave.

"Late the next afternoon the medical man was returning from his other patients; his road lay by the gates of Bowood, and, as Lord Shelbourne was away, he thought he might call to see Mr. Petty, and enforce his directions. What was his surprise, when he had passed the lodge, to see the youth himself, without his hat, playfully running to meet him.

"The doctor was much astonished, as it was bitterly cold, and the ground covered with snow. He rode toward Mr. Petty to rebuke him for his imprudence, when suddenly he disappeared—whither he knew not, but he seemed instantaneously to vanish. The doctor thought it very extraordinary, but that probably the

youth had not wished to be found transgressing orders, and he rode on to the house. There he learned that Mr. Petty had just expired."

My husband said:

"We were talking about not seeing death. These persons do not see real death. They changed their mode of existence, but never died. Neither did the flower seeds of which you spoke, those that had lain buried for centuries. The germ of life was carefully preserved.

"True we read—'That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die.'—Except it be dissolved, separated from the husks that confine it. And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain. We place the seed in the ground. Its outer wrappings decay, decompose, and vanish from our sight; but as we watch, we discover the stalk arising, then the

leaf. Then the buds appear, and the flower blossoms in beauty, delighting us with its perfection and fragrance."

What a marvellous change from the little seed to the wide-spreading branches and beautiful flowers! So the body of our loved one was dissolved and perished; but the life germ has developed and arisen in glorious perfection and beauty; so refined and etherial as not to be discerned with mortal vision. Now that we too, have dropped the mortal, and put on immortality, we see and recognize them, and clasp them to our hearts as an eternal treasure.

Christ said: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

Well may the seed say: "If I never know anything of the beauty and fragrance of leaf and blossom, nothing of the world except that which I find within

the limits of the shell that confines me, let me die, and let God give me a body as it pleaseth him, to every seed his own body."

How often when communing with our own hearts we said: "It is all right. We must needs die. If I can know nothing of God's immense universe beyond the narrow limits of the globe on which I live, without dying, I welcome death. Let me lay aside this heavy clay, and let my spirit be in some lighter habit clad, in which I may fly from world to world and see and investigate the stupenduous works of my Creator! Can I never enjoy the purity for which I sigh, in association and surroundings, without dying? Then let me pass through the valley, and enter the sinless regions beyond.

Can I not have a more perfect medium for mental operations than I now possess in this frail body, subject to pain and weakness? Then let me exchange the

perishing for that which is indestructible. If I cannot know the mysteries of my being and my relations to the universe while in the body, then I would gladly escape where I shall no longer "see through a glass darkly, but face to face, and know even as also I am known." If death shall perform this ministry for me, I gladly welcome it in God's own time.

But death *has* performed this ministry for us; and will perform it for all who remain who are trusting in Jesus, and looking for his appearing.

"Cicero, who lived a hundred years before Christ, wrote most eloquently of the immortality of the soul," said one. His words come to me now.—"I am well convinced, then, that my dear departed friends are so far from having ceased to live, that the state they now enjoy can alone with propriety be called life. This opinion I am induced to embrace, not only as agreeable to the best deductions of

reason, but in just deference, also, to the authority of the noblest and most distinguished philosophers I consider this world as a place which nature never designed for my permanent abode, and I look upon my departure out of it, not as being driven from my habitation, but as leaving my inn." Cicero had long realized the blessed truth of these sentiments.

"The Holy Spirit" said my husband, "must have borne these truths in upon his soul, for he was not privileged with us to learn from the teachings of Christ, Socrates was born five hundred years before Jesus came to earth. In his defense before his judges, who condemned him to death, he argued that death was no great calamity, but rather a blessing. You remember he said:

" ' If death be a removal from hence to another place, and what is said be true, that all the dead are there, what greater

blessing can there be, my judges? At what price would you not estimate a conference with Orpheus and Musaeus, Hesiod and Homer? I, indeed, should be willing to die often if this be true. For me the sojourn there would be admirable, when I should meet with Palamedes and Ajax, son of Telamon, and any other of the ancients who have died by an unjust sentence. At what price, my judges, would not anyone estimate the opportunity of questioning him who led that mighty army against Troy; or Ulysses, Sisyphus, or ten thousand others, whom one might mention, both men and women? With whom to converse and associate and to question them would be an inconceivable happiness. Surely for that the judges there do not condemn to death; for in other respects those who live there are more happy than those who live here, and are henceforth immortal, if at least what is said be true.'

"We can never cease to feel a peculiar interest in these men, as we see them eagerly searching after the truth," replied one. We remember that Plato sought to establish the doctrine of immortality and to demonstrate its truth. How our hearts go out in pity to those who reject the teachings of Christ, and the doctrines of life beyond the tomb."

"I remember," said one of the dear ones beside us, "that even Ingersoll, when laying a loved brother in the grave, spoke in beautiful and touching language, which betokened a hunger of soul which nothing but Christ could have satisfied.

" 'Life,' he said, 'is a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud, and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry. From the voiceless lips of the unreplying dead there comes no word, but in the night of death Hope sees a star, and

listening, Love can hear the rustling of a wing.'"

Why thought I should any listen for a voice from the unreplying dead when God had spoken? Why search the tomb by the light of the torch of human reason when light which is the life of men has come to us from the eternal world? Why do they prefer a flickering taper and ignore the sun? The taper's light will be extinguished by the first breeze created by the death-angel's wing, but Christ lights up the valley with his presence, and conducts us safely through.

We lingered in conversation and contemplation of the glorious character of our King; his truth, his justice, his mercy —his spotless purity, and inconceivable glory.

"O," said my husband, "to think that he wants us to share in his glory! Amazing thought! And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that

they may be one, even as we are one, I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved me. Father I will that they also whom Thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory."

We know that the dazzling splendors that surround the eternal throne, proceed from the immaculate perfections of Him who fills it. He will forever be the great centre and source of bliss and joy to the innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE REUNION.

The longing for the coming of the child left behind on earth. An intimation to prepare for its arrival. The preparation by angels of the mansion house for her; and the final welcome and rejoicing of the reunited family with the multitude of the redeemed in

THE LIFE ETERNAL.

"And he delivered him to his mother."

(LUKE 7:15.)

HOME FACES.

The dear home faces whereupon
That fitful firelight paled and shone.
Henceforward, listen as we will,
The voices of that hearth are still.
Look where we may the wide earth o'er,
Those lighted faces smile no more,
We tread the paths their feet have worn,
We sit beneath their orchard trees,
We hear, like them, the hum of bees
And rustle of the bladed corn;
We turn the pages that they read,
Their written words we linger o'er,
But in the sun they cast no shade,
No voice is heard, no sign is made,
No step is on the conscious floor.
Yet Love will dream and Faith will trust,
(Since He who knows our need is just)
That somehow, somewhere, meet we must.

"Alas for him who never sees
The stars shine through his cypress trees:
Who hopeless lays his dead away,
Nor looks to see the breaking day
Across his mournful marbles play;
Who has not learned in hours of faith
The truth to flesh and sense unknown,
That Life is ever Lord of Death
And Love can never lose its own."

—*John Greenleaf Whittier in "Snow Bound."*

THE REUNION.

It may seem strange from the earthly standpoint, that in my heavenly life I did not feel anxious about my little Edith whom I had left behind, as I had when I was myself on earth, about my sister in heaven. But it is not to be wondered at. Then I had the limitations of the flesh; I knew nothing certainly of the place to which my sister had gone. Now I know something of both worlds, and the wondrous peace of God, which makes all anxiety impossible, enfolded me in its content.

The longing to see and clasp her was not in any sense mingled with pain or with regret. But my mind was continually reciting the pleasures we should enjoy together. I often gathered and filled

the mansion with flowers, remembering the blossoms she loved so well and watered so carefully in the garden.

"Dear child;" I used to think, "How she would revel in these wonderful blooms!" I remembered how she loved to watch the stars at night and smiled to think how I would show her what those shining points in the firmament of the sky really are. I thought of her sober studiousness and dreamed of the progress she would sometime make in heaven when the bars of matter would be lifted and she set free to grow in wisdom and purity.

But all my longing ended with the thought:

"She is as much in my Heavenly Father's care on earth as she would be here. I would not take from her one earthly experience that may help in ever so little, to widen her spiritual view when she comes. If life's affliction will make her joy here more perfect, I want her to taste

of bitterness. Whatever my Heavenly Father has in reserve for her is well. She will come to us when Our Lord calls her."

At last, when the longing for her was so strong that I felt that next to the sight of Jesus, her arrival must be for me the crowning ecstacy of heaven, my husband came to me, where I sat on a grassy hill, looking across a pleasant valley.

"I have been thinking of our precious little Edith," I said, "My only child, child of my dearest love. What joy it will be when we can clasp her again, never more to separate. We have been near her many times since we two met here, but I long for the closer communion of this Morning-World. When I listened to that wondrous melody just before you came, and thought how passionately fond she is of music, I almost imagined I could hear her voice in the responses."

He sat down beside me and let his gaze wander to the distant hills.

"You remember," he said, "the summer we spent at the Adriatic and heard the wives of the fishermen when they came down to the shore at sunset to sing their evening-song? How between the stanzas they would wait and listen to hear if they could catch an answering melody from the water borne from the loved ones, to tell that they were almost home? How sweet to those weary fishermen as the shadows gathered, must have sounded the songs of home, and how their answering notes must have cheered the waiting ones on shore.

"But how much more sweet," I exclaimed, "when they *are* home. When they clasp hands with the journey past. I have thought recently, dear one, that I felt an inner assurance that it is not Our Father's will to have us long separated."

"You are right," he said. "I, too, have received an intimation—from her ministering spirit,—that the time is drawing

near. It was for this reason I came now, to rejoice with you."

I was speechless, dumb with delight. The hour was nearer, then, than I had guessed. I found many dear ones—again and again had been transported with joy as I saw father and mother or sister and brother together, or acquaintances of early years, meeting after their long parting. But this would be so far the dearest of all, to clasp my Edith in the Kingdom.

"Let us hasten," I said as soon as I could speak. "Let us go to meet her. Where will she come?"

"Probably she will enter at once into the city," he said, "I think it is there we shall see her first."

"Ah," I cried, as our wills bore us onward in swift flight toward where the great light grew like a day-star on the nearing horizon. "I must prepare a room for her. I must fill it with flowers of the

THERE STOOD MY LITTLE EDITH WHITE ROBED AND GARLANDED.

kind she loves best, and keep it so, for she may come at any time!"

The flashing rays of the city wove around us, our flying feet pressed the glowing streets. They brought us to our own threshold.

We entered. Angels had strewn the place with lilies, and there, white-robed and garlanded, stood my little Edith! smiling as when I had last bade her farewell in the earth life, expecting soon to return to her, ah, smiling not now in farewell, but in a welcome that would never end.

"Father! Mother!" she cried, and glided into my arms.

We stood together—a family reunited! We could not speak. Our joy was too full for utterance; our hearts filled with the silent heaven of love. Edith's head was pillowed on my bosom, and her father's arms were about us both.

When at length we lifted our faces the

air was filled with music, and we saw encircling us, within and without our mansion, a multitude of redeemed ones, many of whom we had known and loved on earth, who with angelic spirits were rejoicing with us.

And together we lifted our hearts in a song of adoration to him who hath given us when we awake in his likeness, to enter with Him into

THE LIFE ETERNAL.

236.24
W563
Wheeler, Mary Sparkes
AUTHOR
As It Is In Heaven
TITLE
S38738

236.24
W563

S38738

Bethel Theological
SEMINARY
LIBRARY
New Brighton, Minn. - 55112